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GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Northern Ireland

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has reviewed government policies in the Province; further industrial investment has been announced; and an independent inquiry has been set up in response to the report of Amnesty International alleging maltreatment of suspected terrorists by the police.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES UNDER DIRECT RULE

Government policies in Northern Ireland with regard to security, the economy, the political and constitutional position, and social affairs, were reviewed by Mr Roy Mason, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, in the House of Commons on 30 June (*Hansard*, cols 1703-836). Opening a debate on two Orders in Council, one to renew for a further year the arrangements for direct rule (the Northern Ireland Act 1974 (Interim Period Extension) Order 1978) and the other for the continuation for six months of the emergency provisions (the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act 1978 (Continuance) Order 1978), Mr Mason said that the Government wanted to return as much responsibility as it could to representatives of the community in Northern Ireland as soon as possible, but this had not yet proved feasible. He also said that the security situation continued to improve but emergency legislation could not yet be dispensed with.

Security

In a survey of government policies, Mr Mason referred first to the security situation. He said: 'When we take stock of Northern Ireland affairs, we must look for signs of steady progress rather than immediate dramatic results. The past six months have had both good signs and bad. The La Mon House bombing disaster in mid-February was an appalling act of inhumanity.[1] The admission of the cold-blooded killing of a wounded policeman in captivity only two weeks ago was no less horrible.[2] There are, apparently, no depths to which the Provisional IRA will not sink. Those who continue to bless them with the title of freedom fighters should not forget that. Nor should they forget that the men of violence have been condemned utterly by leaders of all sections of the community, particularly strongly by political and church leaders of the minority. The suggestion that I or my officials should parley with their representatives is abhorrent to me.'

Mr Mason said that there had been periods of relative tranquility this year, partly as a result of the vigilance of the security forces. A number of town and village centres, such as Cookstown, Bangor and even Londonderry, which had been enclosed by barriers, had been opened to traffic. In the first six months of 1976, 175 people died; in the comparable period in 1977, the figure was 79; so far this year 49 people had been killed. In the first six months of 1976 there were 890 shootings; so far this year the figure had fallen to 417. The improving trend was clear. Gradually normality was returning to the Province – as shown by the improvement in the number of tourists beginning to come to Northern Ireland again. Last year there were 47,000 more tourists than in 1976.[1]

Those who break the law, continued Mr Mason, would be dealt with as criminals. Special category status was being phased out; there would be no amnesty for convicted criminals. Mr Mason referred to the recent report of Amnesty International (see p 242) and said that the Government had set up an independent Committee of Inquiry to consider the present police procedures and practice relating to the interrogation of persons suspected of scheduled offences and to consider the operation of the present machinery for dealing with complaints against the police. He had undertaken that the report of the Inquiry would be published and he hoped that this would allay any anxieties the House might have on this matter.

'The Royal Ulster Constabulary is making good progress in equipping itself in men, materials and morale, so that it can increasingly take the lead in maintaining law and order throughout the Province. In many areas this is the case already. The police are doing their job, on their own, with the Regular Army or the Ulster Defence Regiment in the background to be called upon if required. Recruitment added 143 to the regular force in the first five months of this year. It now stands at 5,835. Its weaponry has been further improved. Nearly 2,000 policemen have now been trained in the use of the M1 carbine. The

[1]On 17 February a bomb exploded at the La Mon House restaurant near Gransha, County Down, causing an intensive fire. Twelve people were killed and twenty-three injured. The Provisional IRA admitted responsibility for the bombing.

[2]The Provisional IRA claimed to have killed Police Constable William Turbitt after kidnapping him on 17 June following an attack on a patrol car in south Armagh in which another policeman was killed. A post-mortem examination after his body was recovered on 10 July suggested that he had died from injuries shortly after the attack.

[1]In 1977, 457 000 tourists visited Northern Ireland.

programme of providing the RUC with steel-protected Land Rovers is going steadily forward . . . An important computer-based command and control system will shortly be installed in the Belfast area, which, together with a Province-wide teleprinter system, will greatly improve communications and so increase the efficiency of the force in its use of resources.

'The UDR is also steadily building its strength. It is getting close to its target of 2,500 professional full-time men and there are now 14 operational platoons fully recruited and at work. This has made it possible to allocate further territorial areas of responsibility to the UDR, which in these areas becomes the first line of military support for the police.'

The Regular Army still had a vital role to play in supporting the rule of law, continued Mr Mason. This autumn another resident infantry battalion was being introduced to the Province, replacing one of the units which do a four-month-tour of duty. It would stay for 18 months and the soldiers would be accompanied by their families. Resident battalions gained greater familiarity with local conditions and the neighbourhood and represented a step towards normality.

The Economy

Turning to the Government's industrial and employment policies in Northern Ireland, Mr Mason emphasised the very serious nature of the economic problems facing the Province. The unemployment rate in Northern Ireland was nearly twice that in the United Kingdom as a whole. In some parts of the Province, male unemployment was almost 30 per cent. The 'troubles' had increased the difficulties of overcoming grave structural economic problems and geographical disadvantages. Mr Mason said that all the people of Northern Ireland should be 'pulling together' with the Government in the common effort to overcome these difficulties. He attached great importance to the Economic Council, where representatives of both sides of industry and independent experts could meet and analyse economic problems and consider how management and unions could tackle their common task in partnership with the Government. The trade unions in particular had done sterling work in holding industry and production together during the troubled years.

The Government had intensified its effort to attract new investment to the Province from overseas – particularly from the United States and Europe – and to encourage the expansion of existing investments. There was a range of industrial incentives designed in scale and character to meet Northern Ireland's special needs. The Government's aim was to make the Province truly competitive in the search for mobile international investment. He and the Minister of State had visited the United States as part of a vigorous promotional effort. There had been some encouraging responses. Last year, American-owned companies increased their stake in Northern Ireland by £55 million. Du Pont announced a major modernisation and re-equipment programme (see p 407, 1977); Goodyear announced a major new research and development investment (see p 242); AVX would be opening a plant providing 600 new jobs (see p 197); General Motors had just announced plans to invest £15 million in a factory manufacturing seat belts and providing another 600 jobs (see p 242). To this list could be added the German firm, MAN, which had decided to establish a joint undertaking with Harland and Wolff to build medium-speed diesel engines (see p 242).

These were, of course, most welcome developments but even this limited scale of success had not come easily and it would be wrong to disguise the fact that much still remained to be done to tackle the 'appalling level of unemployment'. Northern Ireland needed all the advantages it could offer to investors, not least its fine industrial relations record.

Mr Mason said that the Government had made a 'massive commitment' to alleviating the worst effects of the present recession. Under the industrial training and job creation programmes, places were currently provided for almost 6,500 people. The youth opportunities programme would provide an additional 2,000 opportunities in training and work preparation for young people who would otherwise be unemployed. Through the grant aid training scheme a contribution was made to training a further 6,000 people while employment and recruitment subsidies helped to provide or retain some 31,000 jobs. In the case of the Northern Ireland meat industry the Government had taken action to protect not only 3,000 jobs but also the whole future of the industry which was threatened as a result of changes in the green pound rates. Milk producers had also been helped. Mr Mason said the Government would continue its 'vigorous efforts in industry, commerce and agriculture' as part of its policy of giving the people of the Province the opportunity to help themselves. It was the people of Northern Ireland who could do most to create the orderly and peaceful environment which was essential if their grave economic problems were to be overcome.

Political and Constitutional Matters

With regard to the constitutional position Mr Mason said: 'There has been no shift in the Government's fundamental approach to the position of Northern Ireland within the United Kingdom. Any change in the constitutional status of Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom can be made only with the consent of the majority of the people who live there. That is the position of all the major parties at Westminster. It is the position of the SDLP [Social Democratic and Labour Party]. The future of Northern Ireland is a matter for decision by the people of Northern Ireland. The Government cannot and will not seek to impose constitutional change. Such a course would be morally indefensible and if any body of political opinion were opposed to it it would be foredoomed to failure.

'People in Northern Ireland have differing long-term aspirations, but they will not be coerced by violence into changing their views. We want to create conditions in which the people of Northern Ireland, free from coercion, can decide matters for themselves. We want to see a locally elected administration with substantial powers. I have already said that I am prepared to talk to the parties on the basis of the criteria set out in the five-point plan that I published last November (see pp 456-7, 1977).

'Those five points are: (a) there should be a single Assembly, elected by proportional representation;

(b) that Assembly should exercise real responsibility over a wide range of functions and have a consultative role in legislation; (c) the arrangements should be temporary and envisage progress to full legislative devolution; (d) although temporary, they must be durable, which means that minority interests must be safeguarded and that Northern Ireland political parties must be prepared to make them work; (e) they must make good administrative sense.'

Mr Mason continued by saying that such principles were unexceptionable. He emphasised that he was not committed to any particular 'cut-and-dried' arrangements. He would be happy to discuss proposals significantly different from those so far suggested but they must be capable of securing a wide degree of acceptance in both parts of the community. Such acceptance would be achieved only if the new arrangements provided an opportunity for political representatives of the majority and minority communities to participate on a fair basis in a partnership administration.

In the meantime, continued Mr Mason, he wanted to ensure that as much use as possible was made of the experience and expertise of the members of the 26 locally elected district councils. Thirty per cent of the members of the health and personal social service boards and 40 per cent of the education and library boards were nominated by district councils which were consulted on a wide range of matters. These consultative arrangements had proved valuable and he would aim to extend and develop them as far as possible. Mr Mason pointed out that additional minor powers had been given to district councils in some of the draft Orders in Council published recently. As direct rule continued, it would be necessary to look carefully at legislation coming forward to see what further responsibilities should be given to district councils. He would look to see whether the right principles were being properly applied in the allocation of functions and responsibilities between district councils and the regional government being administered by the Government.

Social Matters

Mr Mason concluded his review by saying that the Province faced massive social problems and over the past four years the Government had been getting to grips with these. Some of the measures taken included the Belfast Transportation Plan first published in 1969. Improvements to the Belfast Central rail line and station were carried out at a cost of £5 million, and in April 1978 a programme of improvements to the roads, railways and public services within Belfast, costing £100 million over the next nine years, was announced (see p 197). Belfast, in common with many other cities in the United Kingdom, was suffering from urban decay and severe social and unemployment problems. The Government had made extra resources available, including £130 million over the next five years for the provision and improvement of housing. On urban renewal, a planning team had been set up to co-ordinate the programme to improve employment prospects, health and social services and educational and recreational facilities. It works in consultation with voluntary bodies and local community representatives.

Progress was being made on social problems. In the past year 34 'shebeens', or illegal drinking clubs, had been closed down. The 'Outset' survey of physically handicapped people had recently been initiated; proposals were about to be published on improving services for the mentally handicapped; and a major review was in progress on law and practice on the care and treatment of children and young persons. In all these fields the greatest pains had been taken to ensure the fullest possible consultation with local feeling. This had been done on the sensitive and difficult question of divorce. The Matrimonial Causes (Northern Ireland) Order[1] was introduced after the widest consultation and was prompted by the considered advice of the Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights. The Commission was an important organ within the Province for expressing views on social issues which raise questions of human rights. Its work, together with that of the Ombudsman, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Fair Employment Agency meant that the position of the minority in Northern Ireland was both scrutinised and safeguarded.

As far as possible, the Government was determined to act with the consent of the people of Northern Ireland, whether in making social reforms or in bringing about constitutional advantages. It had no wish to impose change which the people of Northern Ireland did not want. Contacts had to be kept open with the Northern Ireland people, including the leaders of political parties. Mr Mason said that he held, and would continue to hold, periodic meetings with local political leaders to exchange views. As long as direct rule had to continue, it would be conducted with care and concern for the views and interests of both of the traditions which make up the life of Northern Ireland.

Opposition Support

Mr Airey Neave, Conservative spokesman on Northern Ireland, said that the Opposition would support the Orders. It was apparent that the terrorist organisations still had the manpower and the armament to continue this bloody and useless conflict. The Opposition recognised that the Government would have to continue providing substantial assistance to Northern Ireland's industry for some time to come. Like other regions with special problems, Northern Ireland needed special measures if these problems were to be solved.

Conservatives would not support any modification in the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act which gives the security forces power to hold suspects for up to three days without preferring charges. This provision, coupled with powers available under the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act, secures a vital period for information to be obtained and put together by those involved in intelligence work. Some members of the security forces regarded it as imperative that Provisional Sinn Fein should be banned. They found

[1]The Matrimonial Causes (Northern Ireland) Order, which was approved in the House of Commons on 20 June (*Hansard*, cols 313-66), brings the law in Northern Ireland relating to divorce, annulment of marriage, judicial separation and other matters connected with marriage broadly into accord with the law of England and Wales. The Order provides that the sole ground of divorce shall be that the marriage has broken down irretrievably.

it incomprehensible that the Government should concentrate so much effort on crushing the Provisional IRA while leaving their partners in Provisional Sinn Fein to walk around scot-free. From any ordinary person's view the two organisations were two arms of one body.

After four years of direct rule there was a need for political progress. The Opposition had put forward a programme for regional administration based on an elected council in which all parties could participate. This would remove from Parliament much business which was of a strictly local nature. Mr Neave considered that any talks that take place should be limited to local government regional services. Plans for weakening the union with Great Britain were unacceptable to his party.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENTS

Three major industrial projects were announced in June. General Motors, the United States-based motor vehicle manufacturer, plans to open a seat-belt plant at Dundonald, near Belfast; The Goodyear Tyre and Rubber Company is to establish an international research centre at its Craigavon premises; and a joint venture agreement has been made between Harland and Wolff and MAN (Maschinenfabrik Augsburg-Nuernberg Aktiengesellschaft), the West German diesel engineering company.

The General Motors seat-belt plant to be opened at a cost of £15 million is expected to begin production early in 1980 and eventually to provide employment for 600 people. This will be the corporation's first seat-belt plant in Europe and, with a production of 2 million seat belts a year, will initially supply General Motors' own subsidiaries, Vauxhall and Opel. Welcoming the decision to establish the new plant in Northern Ireland, Mr Roy Mason said the corporation had found there the facilities it needed – 'skilled, trainable labour, an excellent history in the crucial field of labour performance and a well-developed communications network'.

The research centre to be established by the Goodyear Tyre and Rubber Company at a cost of £3 million is expected to provide 50 additional jobs for graduates and other highly-qualified personnel. The company already has about 50 people working on research and the expansion is expected to be operational in 1979. Mr Don Concannon, Minister of State in the Northern Ireland Office, said that it was an outstanding gesture of confidence in Northern Ireland that Goodyear, with 120 plants world-wide, should choose Craigavon as the location for the facility. He said that the Department of Commerce's new scheme to encourage research and development projects (see p 334, 1977) had attracted considerable attention and it was expected to conclude agreements with at least 12 companies.

The Belfast shipbuilders, Harland and Wolff, and MAN of Augsburg, West Germany, have entered into an agreement covering the production and sale of medium-speed diesel engines of MAN design. The new range of engines to be built by Harland and Wolff will augment and be complementary to the diesel and steam marine propulsion units which have traditionally comprised the greater proportion of the work at the shipyard's engine works. The joint venture is expected to save 400 jobs there by the early 1980s. At the same time, co-operation with Harland and Wolff will give MAN the opportunity of extending their marketing activities into new areas.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT

The following response was made in the House of Commons on 8 June by Mr Roy Mason, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, in a written reply to a request for a statement on the report by Amnesty International containing allegations of maltreatment of suspected terrorists by the Royal Ulster Constabulary (*Hansard*, cols 229-34). Mr Mason's statement is given in full.

Amnesty International Report: Statement by Her Majesty's Government

1 When Amnesty International's research mission visited Northern Ireland towards the end of 1977, the authorities co-operated to the fullest possible extent with the mission to ensure that they were properly informed about current practices and procedures.

2 Amnesty International sent the research mission's report to Her Majesty's Government on 2 May. The report recommends:

(i) the establishment of a public inquiry which would investigate the allegations of maltreatment made to the mission and would have access to all relevant data on individual cases of alleged maltreatment;

(ii) that the terms of reference of this inquiry should include consideration of the rules relating to interrogation and detention, admissibility of statements, and the effectiveness of machinery for investigating complaints against the police of assault during interview;

(iii) that pending the report of such an inquiry, immediate steps be taken to ensure that suspects being interviewed by the Royal Ulster Constabulary on suspicion of terrorism are protected against possible maltreatment, including access to lawyers at an early stage of detention.

3 Her Majesty's Government have carefully considered the report and the recommendations. In doing so they have been conscious of their full commitment to the following principles:

(a) Her Majesty's Government are acutely aware that terrorism can present a grave dilemma for democratic governments, involving the striking of a difficult balance between effectively combating such criminal activity and maintaining the civil liberties of a free society. The Government are determined to uphold the law by all means in their power and to deal by due legal process with those who offend against it.

(b) The Government do not authorise, and will not condone, the ill-treatment of persons held in custody. As far as the Royal Ulster Constabulary are concerned, the Chief Constable has made it quite clear that any such activity is forbidden and will be dealt with in accordance with the law.

(c) It is the firm policy of Her Majesty's Government that all members of the security forces in Northern Ireland shall operate within the spirit and letter of the law laid down and reviewed periodically by Parliament.

4 The record of British Governments since the beginning of the present troubles in Northern Ireland demonstrates a continuing concern to have the fullest possible regard for human rights and sensitivities, while dealing firmly with terrorism. A series of committees and inquiries – Compton, Diplock, Gardiner and others – are evidence that the Government of the day has always been ready to investigate matters causing public concern and to take independent advice on measures which might be necessary to safeguard the rights of the individual. At the present time, the operation of the Prevention of Terrorism Act is being reviewed at the Government's request by Lord Shackleton, and his report will be relevant to some of the issues covered by Amnesty International.

Recommendation (i): The Allegations of Maltreatment

5 The report considers 78 cases in which allegations of maltreatment were made to the mission. These should be considered against the research mission's own statement that during the first 11 months of 1977, 3,444 suspects were interviewed by the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

6 Of the 78 cases, in 39 the research mission interviewed individuals in respect of allegations on which medical evidence was not available. In 26 of the remaining cases the mission received some documentary medical evidence but were unable to interview the individuals concerned. In 13 cases they interviewed persons where some medical evidence was also available. No official papers on individual cases were seen by the research mission. The case material in the report therefore necessarily represents incomplete evidence on the allegations which have been made.

7 The Government are concerned to seek out the truth of the matter and to take the necessary action. But it has not been possible to examine further the allegations since they have been put forward to the Government on an anonymous basis. The appropriate legal procedure is for allegations about criminal conduct to be considered by the Director of Public Prosecutions in Northern Ireland, who is the independent officer of the Crown charged with deciding whether to bring criminal proceedings, and his consideration of cases is always on the basis of the confidentiality which attaches to his office. Amnesty International have declined to give in confidence to the Director of Public Prosecutions the names of the persons who made the statements, on the ground that the mission pledged confidentiality to them.

8 A public inquiry, as recommended by Amnesty International, would face the same problem of confidentiality. It could consider the individual cases only if those concerned were prepared to identify themselves publicly.

9 The Government are convinced that a public inquiry into the allegations of maltreatment would not be the course most consistent with the public interest. It would in effect involve a prolonged series of public trials of allegations at present unidentified. It would not be logical to confine the scope of such an inquiry to the 78 cases selected by Amnesty International. In order to ensure that such an inquiry was both fair to all concerned and effective in producing conclusions, it would be necessary to permit representation and cross-examination, and to grant immunity from prosecution to witnesses as is done in the case of all similar inquiries. It would be virtually impossible to prosecute anybody who had given evidence and against whom a prima facie case was found to exist.

10 None of these disadvantages would apply to the procedure proposed by Her Majesty's Government, ie, full consideration by the Director of Public Prosecutions, which is the normal procedure when complaints are made and the only way in which the authorities could take action through the law on a complaint.

11 Accordingly, Her Majesty's Government do not accept recommendation (i) above. Instead, they invite Amnesty International to seek the consent of those who have made statements to the research mission to provide the Director of Public Prosecutions with all available material relevant to their complaints to enable him to examine those complaints in the normal way, with a view to prosecution where the evidence justifies it.

12 If that invitation is accepted, the Attorney General will invite the Director of Public Prosecutions (in addition to any decisions he takes on legal proceedings) to make a report on his general findings and conclusions arising out of the examination of these cases, for the information of the Government and of the Committee of Inquiry which the Government propose to establish (see paragraph 13 below).

Recommendation (ii): Interrogation Procedure, Complaints Procedures and the Admissibility of Statements

13 On *police practice and procedure,* the Government have decided, following a suggestion by the Chief Constable, that there should be an independent and impartial investigation. They are therefore setting up an independent Committee of Inquiry, which will consider present police practice and procedures in Northern Ireland relating to the interrogation of persons suspected of scheduled offences, and will report and make recommendations. The Chairman of the Inquiry will have judicial experience. The Inquiry, which will sit in private, will report to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland who will publish the report of the Inquiry as soon as possible after he has received it, together with his own conclusions on it.

14 The Committee of Inquiry will have the opportunity of considering any general conclusions which the Director of Public Prosecutions draws from the cases he has been able to consider in the Amnesty International report (see paragraph 11 above).

15 The *complaints procedure* in Northern Ireland has been revised recently. In the Government's view

there are legal remedies in practice which provide a complainant with adequate means of redressing his grievances. The consideration given by the Director of Public Prosecutions to allegations of a breach of the criminal law by the police is designed to establish whether a prosecution can properly be brought against an identified person. Where the Director of Public Prosecutions decides not to proceed, one of two courses is still open to a complainant. He can bring an action for civil damages; or, if he is arraigned in court on a criminal charge supported by a statement which he is alleged to have made freely, he can challenge the validity of the statement in open court.

16 The Government propose that the Committee of Inquiry (paragraph 13) should have terms of reference which will enable them to consider the effectiveness of the procedure for dealing with complaints, as recommended by Amnesty International.

17 In any case all complaints, and the investigation reports on them, are scrutinised by the independent Police Complaints Board for Northern Ireland under procedures which took effect from 1 September 1977. The Board are empowered to make special reports to the Secretary of State on any matters coming to their notice to which they consider that his attention should be drawn by reason of their gravity or of other exceptional circumstances. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland expects the Police Complaints Board, under the Provisions of Article 11(2) of the Police (Northern Ireland) Order 1977, to examine all the complaints and investigation reports referred to them and to consider whether any pattern of irregularity emerges that they consider should be drawn to his attention. This is a continuing responsibility of the Board. The findings of any such report to the Secretary of State will be published.

18 On the question of the *admissibility of statements,* Her Majesty's Government do not accept Amnesty's contention that the operation of Section 6 of the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act 1973, has led to the erosion of the rights of suspects. Section 6,[1] which was introduced on the recommendation of the Diplock Committee and, after two years' experience, endorsed by the Gardiner Committee, does not affect the duty of the court to have regard to all the circumstances in which a confession which is received in evidence was made. Furthermore, and as the Gardiner Committee noted with approval in their report (Cmnd 5847), the statutory test embodied in Section 6 has not abrogated the wide discretion of the court to exclude or disregard any statement of the accused, even where the conditions of Section 6 have been satisfied, if in the view of the court the interests of justice so require. Thus the existing law fully protects persons who are accused on the basis of their own statements, and Her Majesty's Government are not aware of any case where the courts have taken account of a statement which the courts accepted was obtained as a result of violence or the threat of violence. Amnesty International have not claimed that such a case exists.

19 The Government therefore believe that Amnesty International's legal understanding of Section 6 is inaccurate and that its request for a re-examination of it is misconceived. Accordingly, the terms of reference of the Committee of Inquiry will not include another examination of Section 6.

Recommendation (iii): Immediate Steps to Protect Suspects

20 The Government have a continuing concern that the rights of individuals should be protected, whether they be suspects under interrogation or interrogating officers. Measures to this end have been and are being taken and are continuously being reviewed to see whether they can be improved. The Government and the Chief Constable do not intend to cease making improvements pending the report of the Committee of Inquiry. For example, the Chief Constable is carrying forward the consideration he is already giving to the use that can be made of technical aids and particularly the practicality of introducing closed circuit television to monitor the interrogation of suspects.

21 The difficult question of access to lawyers is already under examination by Lord Shackleton in his review of the operation of the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Acts 1974 and 1976 and can be considered by the Committee of Inquiry in its review of all aspects of the practice and procedures relating to the interrogation of suspects.

Summary

22 Accordingly the following action is being taken:

(a) an independent Committee of Inquiry will be chaired by someone with judicial experience and will consider the present police practice and procedures in Northern Ireland relating to the interrogation of persons suspected of scheduled offences and the effectiveness of the present machinery for dealing with complaints against the police;

(b) Amnesty International are being asked to seek the consent of those who made statements to them to provide the Director of Public Prosecutions with all available material so that the complaints can be examined with a view to prosecution where the evidence justifies it;

(c) the Director of Public Prosecutions will additionally report, for the information of the Government and for the Committee of Inquiry, on his general findings and conclusions arising out of these cases;

(d) the Police Complaints Board, as part of its continuing examination of all complaints and investigation reports, will consider whether any pattern of irregularity emerges that should be drawn to attention;

(e) the reports of the independent Inquiry and of the Police Complaints Board will be published;

(f) in advance of the outcome of the Inquiry, the Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary is carrying forward the consideration he is already

[1]This part of the Act provides that a statement made by a person accused of a scheduled offence may be given in evidence unless it was obtained by torture or inhuman or degrading treatment.

giving to the use to be made of technical aids, and particularly the practicality of introducing closed circuit television to monitor the interrogation of suspects.

Inquiry's Terms of Reference

The membership and terms of reference of the Inquiry to be set up to consider police procedures and practice in Northern Ireland were announced by Mr Mason in a written answer in the House of Commons on 16 June (*Hansard,* col 696). The Inquiry will be chaired by His Honour Judge Bennett, QC, and the other two members will be Sir James Haughton, formerly Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary, and Professor John Marshall, Professor of Clinical Neurology in the University of London.

The terms of reference of the Inquiry will be: 'to examine police procedures and practice in Northern Ireland relating to the interrogation of persons suspected of scheduled offences; and to examine the operation of the present procedures for dealing with complaints relating to the conduct of the police in the course of the process of interrogation.'

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE

European Community

Following the failure of the Council of Ministers to agree on the internal aspects of a common fisheries policy, Britain took measures to protect its stocks of fish; these include a ban on herring catches to the west of Scotland. In a House of Commons debate, both Opposition and Labour speakers supported the Government's views on the Community's fisheries policy. In the field of external relations, the Community has agreed to start talks on Portugal's application to join the Community, and to open the renegotiation of the Lomé Convention. All member states have now ratified the Act, which has entered into force, governing direct elections to the European Assembly. At a political co-operation meeting, ministers discussed aid to Zaire, and have agreed to involve Greece in the Community's political co-operation procedures and to exchange information with Turkey on relevant political matters. Foreign ministers have completed their report on the common economic strategy, to be presented to the European Council in July, and have agreed on a number of measures including changes to the Community's regional development fund. Other agreements have been made concerning measures to protect Community shipping and environmental policy.

FISHERIES

Opinion in the House of Commons

Initiating a debate on fishing in the House of Commons on 15 June (*Hansard*, cols 1195-255), the chief Conservative front-bench spokesman on agriculture, Mr John Peyton, pointed to the continuing depletion of stocks, and, referring to proposals on the allocation of catches in British waters to the Community member states (see p 46), offered his party's support to the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Mr John Silkin, so long as he resists demands which we regard as unreasonable and intrusive, and so long as he continues to show himself willing to take active steps now to conserve stocks'. The Liberal member for Orkney and Zetland, Mr Jo Grimond (a former leader of the Liberal Party), said that the Minister 'may go to Brussels knowing full well that he has the total support of the House throughout all parties in pressing upon those in Brussels that their present attitude towards British fishing is intolerable to us, and that we are determined to preserve the fish in the North Sea and to ensure that the industry is reasonably treated'.

In concluding the debate, Mr Silkin said: 'The House has shown that it regards the continuation of a viable United Kingdom fishing industry as its major aim. Therefore, I shall go to [the Council meeting] in the knowledge that the House is behind me in demanding a fair deal for British fishermen. I regard that as my paramount duty during those negotiations' (see below).

Council Meeting

At its meeting on 20 and 21 June, the Council resumed its discussion of fisheries (see pp 46-7).

Internal Aspects

The Council agreed to return at a later date to the problems of laying down new arrangements for the conservation and management of fishery resources. During a discussion of proposals for the conservation of herring stocks, the Commission and some member states expressed the view that it was desirable to await more detailed scientific advice; the discussion was to be resumed at the Council meeting on 24 and 25 July, when the agenda was also to include fishing plans for the waters off western Ireland and other matters.

In a statement about the meeting in the House of Commons on 22 June (*Hansard*, cols 717-26), the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Mr John Silkin, said: 'In a discussion on revising the common fisheries policy, I again emphasised the political and economic importance of the fishing industry in the United Kingdom, and the strength and unanimity of feeling expressed in this House during the debate on 15 June [see above]. I regret to say that, despite the willingness the United Kingdom has shown to be flexible in the search for an agreement, the other members of the Community showed no readiness to depart from the position they had adopted at the Council meeting last January, and consequently no progress could be made. . . .

'The Council failed to agree on a Commission proposal to introduce a ban on further catches of herring to the west of Scotland. There is clear, independent, scientific advice that this stock, which is of the highest importance for the future of our herring industry, is in danger. The Government will therefore now have to consider urgently what must be done to protect it.

'I informed the Council that [the] Government

would now have to decide, in the light of the Community's failure to take the necessary decisions, on what further action we need to take, in accordance with our rights and obligations as the coastal state, to protect and conserve the fish stocks in United Kingdom waters' (see below, 'Britain's Conservation Measures').

External Aspects

The Council agreed to extend until the end of July the existing reciprocal fishing arrangements with the Faroe Islands, Norway and Sweden, and to introduce, as an exceptional measure, catch quotas for July only for member countries' cod and haddock fishing in part of Norwegian waters.

Mr Silkin pointed out in his statement that this extension was subject to a quota arrangement off northern Norway 'which will help to ensure that the United Kingdom maintains its share of the cod and haddock catches in that area, and that overfishing by other countries will be contained'.

Britain's Conservation Measures

On 3 July, in a written reply to a question in the House of Commons, asking what further measures he proposed to take to conserve fish stocks in United Kingdom waters, the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Mr John Silkin, said: 'The Government has sought the Commission's approval, in accordance with agreed procedures, to the following measures which are necessary to conserve fish stocks within United Kingdom fishery limits: (a) a ban on all direct fishing for herring within United Kingdom fishery limits off the west of Scotland . . . with the exception of the Clyde stock, to come into effect on July 6, 1978; (b) a reduction in the maximum permitted by-catch of protected species in small-mesh fisheries from 20 per cent to 10 per cent by weight, with the exception of nephrops [a kind of lobster] fisheries, to come into effect within United Kingdom fishery limits on July 11, 1978; (c) an extension for the period from October 1 to March 31 of the eastern boundary of the current prohibited area for Norway pout fishing from the Greenwich meridian to 2° east in waters under United Kingdom sovereignty or jurisdiction; and (d) the prohibition in all waters within United Kingdom fishery limits of the use of nets or less than 70-mm mesh for fishing for nephrops from November 1, 1978.

'The Commission's approval may be sought for further measures considered by [the] Government to be necessary for the conservation of fish stocks in waters under the sovereignty or jurisdiction of the United Kingdom. In this context the Government is considering the need to strengthen existing provisions on the enforcement of the minimum mesh size regulations including carriage of nets of more than one mesh size and the need to regulate herring fishing in the Irish Sea' (*Hansard*, written answers, cols 13-14).

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Community ministers with special responsibility for the environment met on 30 May and agreed on two directives.

Lead Content in Petrol

The first directive sets from January 1981 the maximum level for lead in petrol at 0·4 grams per litre. This date is in accordance with the British Government's policy, announced on 4 March 1976, on reducing the lead content of petrol (see p 189, 1976).

Quality of Water for Freshwater Fish

The second directive concerns the quality of water for freshwater fish, and is aimed at the protection and improvement of fresh waters which are or could become capable of supporting fish life. Designation of waters to which the standards will apply will be a matter for member states.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Enlargement

On 6 June the Community's foreign ministers formally accepted Portugal's application to join the European Community and agreed to open negotiations as soon as possible. Portugal's application was submitted to the President of the Community's Council of Ministers on 28 March 1977 (see p 149, 1977).

Lomé Convention

Directives enabling the Commission to start negotiations for the drawing up of a new Lomé Convention (see pp 51-3, 1975) were approved by the Council on 27 June. The present Convention expires on 1 March 1980, and the formal opening of the renegotiations will take place on 24 July, with substantive talks beginning in September.

DIRECT ELECTIONS

On 7 June the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, Dr David Owen, signed the instrument of ratification, providing for Britain's participation in direct elections to the European Assembly. At a meeting of the Council of Ministers on 27 June, it was noted that all member states had now completed the national procedures necessary for the adoption of the Act of 20 September 1976 on direct elections, which will enter into force on 1 July 1978. In accordance with the Act, the Council will formally consult the Assembly on the date for the first election, which is likely to take place from 7 to 10 June 1979 (see p 150).

POLITICAL CO-OPERATION MEETING

At a political co-operation meeting in Copenhagen on 12 June, Community foreign ministers held an informal discussion on Zaire. They heard a full report on the Paris meeting on 5 June, and discussed the meeting to be held in Brussels on 13 and 14 June to decide on ways in which best to help the Zairian economy (see p 254). At a press conference following the Copenhagen meeting, Dr Owen said that no decisions had been taken about a Community position. Member states attending this meeting would do so in their individual capacity, and the Commission would attend as a member of

the International Monetary Fund and other bodies, and as the organisation responsible for Community aid.

Ministers also discussed ways of involving Greece in the Community's political co-operation procedures, and agreed on a timetable for this process in the period before it becomes a full member of the Community. In addition, they agreed in principle to establish arrangements whereby Turkey would be offered a mutual exchange of information on relevant political matters.

TRANSPORT

Shipping

The Council agreed on 12 June to set up a system permitting collection of information on the activities of fleets of countries whose practices are harmful to the shipping interests of member states and undermine the competitiveness of member states' fleets engaged in international maritime trade. Transport ministers also agreed to the joint use of countermeasures against offending countries, and asked officials to work out details of implementation of information-gathering in relation to centrally-planned economies and flags-of-convenience fleets for their next meeting in November.

It was also agreed to recommend a timetable for ratification by member states of international conventions and other forms of co-ordinated action in relation to maritime safety and pollution.

Summer Time

Having taken stock of progress on the proposal for a directive on summer time arrangements, the Council noted that it would not be possible to reach a decision in time for application of a uniform summer time period for the whole Community during 1979.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY

At a meeting on 26 and 27 June the Community's foreign ministers considered a number of questions relating to economic and social policy.

Common Economic Strategy

The ministers completed a report concerning the common strategy on the economic and social situation which Community leaders had agreed to embark on at their meeting in Copenhagen in April (see p 150). This report will be submitted to the next meeting of the European Council in Bremen on 6 and 7 July. In this context, it was noted that progress had been achieved in both national and Community energy policies.

Regional Development Fund

Ministers also settled the main outstanding points in the regulation setting up the new regional development fund, which is intended to be more flexible in the rules concerning the projects eligible to be financed by the fund. On 9 June the Commission announced the first allocation of grants from the 1978 fund, of which Britain will receive £22·7 million. This figure relates to two industrial and 200 infrastructure projects.

Multilateral Trade Negotiations

The Council adopted a set of conclusions to serve as guidelines to the Community negotiators in the next stage of the multilateral trade negotiations (see p 150, footnote 2).

Company Law

A directive on the harmonisation of the annual accounts of limited companies was also approved. This provides for the uniform preparation, presentation and publication of company accounts throughout the Community. The main purpose of the directive is to protect members, employed persons, creditors and other third parties. However, because of its wide scope, this measure will also facilitate co-operation between firms in different countries, stimulate Community investment operations, and provide the public with more information on company activities.

Dentists

A number of directives were approved concerning training and the mutual recognition of formal qualifications in dentistry. The aim of these directives is to facilitate the exercise of the right of establishment and dentists' freedom to provide services within the Community.

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

The regular six-monthly ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council was held in Washington on 30 and 31 May. The meeting was attended by heads of State or Government of the Alliance, including Britain's Prime Minister, Mr James Callaghan, and other ministers. In Brussels, the Eurogroup met in ministerial session on 17 May, and the Defence Planning Committee on 18 and 19 May.

NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL

The following is the text of the communiqué issued after the meeting (headings added):

1 *The North Atlantic Council met with the participation of heads of State and Government in Washington on 30 and 31 May 1978.*

2 *Since its inception the Alliance has served to guarantee security, enhance co-operation and cohesion, and promote peace. Its fundamental vitality lies in the fact that all allied countries enjoy democratic systems of government. The allies remain convinced that these systems provide the most humane and effective means of organising society to deal with the challenges of the modern world. They reaffirmed the central role of the Alliance as the guardian of their collective security, and renewed their pledge to consult with one another about the common goals and purposes of the Alliance for the years ahead.*

3 *The allied leaders noted that their meeting follows a year of intense activity, analysis and reassessment, aimed at ensuring that the Alliance can meet future tasks. In particular the allies have successfully undertaken the study and implementation of the decisions and initiatives taken in common at the Council's meeting in London last May* [see pp 220-1, 1977].

Long-term Trends in East -West Relations

4 *The fresh study of long-term trends in East-West relations, decided upon in London, has confirmed the continuing validity of the two complementary aims of the Alliance, to maintain security and pursue* détente. *Based on an examination of the situation and trends in the USSR and the other Warsaw Pact countries, the Council's study concludes that members of the Alliance must maintain their solidarity and their vigilance, and keep their defences at the level rendered necessary by the Warsaw Pact's offensive capabilities; while at the same time, striving to promote* détente. *The study has also confirmed that relations between the allies and the Warsaw Pact countries have become more extensive, but that serious causes of tension will persist.*

5 *The allied leaders noted with concern the repeated instances in which the Soviet Union and some of its allies have exploited situations of instability and regional conflict in the developing world. Disregard for the indivisibility of* détente *cannot but jeopardise the further improvement of East-West relations. They also emphasised, however, that these situations should not be viewed exclusively in an East-West context, and reaffirmed the importance they attach to encouraging peaceful settlements through negotiation by the countries and regional organisations themselves.*

Berlin and Germany

6 *The allies reviewed the developments concerning Berlin and Germany as a whole. They noted that since the ministerial meeting in December 1977* [see pp 10-12], *the situation in and around Berlin has been generally without serious disturbance, but that the difficulties had persisted in certain important fields. They reaffirmed the previously stated positions of the Alliance, particularly the conviction that the strict observance and full implementation of all provisions of the quadripartite agreement of 3 September 1971 are essential for the promotion of* détente, *the maintenance of security and the development of co-operation throughout Europe.*[1]

The Development of *Détente*

7 *The allies remain determined to pursue as constructive and positive a relationship as possible with the Soviet Union and the other East European countries, which they see as being essential to international peace. They reaffirmed their view that closer contact and understanding should be further encouraged, with a view to enlarging the basis for a more genuine and lasting* détente.

[1]For further information on Berlin, see COI reference pamphlet *Berlin and East-West Relations*, R6035/7e.

8 *The allies remain convinced that full implementation of the CSCE* [Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, see pp 305-12, 1975] *Final Act is of essential importance to the improvement of East-West relations. The allies welcomed the thorough review of implementation which took place in Belgrade* [see pp 115-17], *and noted that human rights and humanitarian questions have been confirmed as legitimate areas of concern to the international community. They recalled that all participating states reaffirmed their resolve to implement the Helsinki Final Act in full and their will to continue the multilateral process initiated by the CSCE. They regretted, however, that the Belgrade meeting did not have a more substantial outcome: they stressed the importance of better implementation of all the provisions of the Final Act so that, by the time of the Madrid meeting in 1980, the review of implementation will show that significant improvement has been made not only in relations between states, but also in the lives of individuals. In this respect, they found it incompatible with the Final Act and with* détente *that the Soviet Union and some other Eastern European countries fail to recognise the right of their citizens to act upon the provisions of the Helsinki document without being subjected to repressive measures.*[1]

The World Economic Situation

9 *The allied leaders reiterated their determination to work vigorously for a more effective and equitable world economic system. The Governments of the allied countries, by their long-standing efforts in extending aid to the developing countries, have demonstrated the importance they attach to this objective. They call upon the Warsaw Pact countries to participate fully in this endeavour.*

10 *International co-operation in the fields of science and technology and of the environment can likewise contribute to a better world. In this respect, allied leaders noted with satisfaction the achievements of the NATO Science Committee, which recently celebrated its twentieth anniversary, and of the Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society.*

11 *Having in mind the provisions of Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty,*[2] *the allied leaders recognise the great importance of securing a sound basis for the further improvement of the economic and social conditions of their peoples. Difficulties in maintaining a sufficient and sustained economic growth are affecting the ability of some members of the Alliance to maintain an effective defence effort. In addition to allied assistance and co-operation in the defence field, those countries also need economic assistance and co-operation aimed at helping them in their development programmes and in the improvement of the living standards of their peoples. To this end, the Secretary-General was*

[1]For a statement on this issue by the British Government, see p 205.

[2]In this Article the signatories agree to contribute toward the development of peaceful and friendly international relations 'by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions are founded, and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being'. They also agree to seek to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and to encourage economic collaboration between any or all of them.

invited to conduct a study, taking into account existing efforts by allied members bilaterally and in other international fora, and to report to the Council on the way in which this problem could be addressed.

Greece and Turkey

12 *The allies noted with satisfaction the meeting of the Prime Ministers of Greece and Turkey. They expressed the hope that this dialogue on bilateral questions will contribute to the solution of the differences between the two countries.*

13 *The allies reaffirmed the importance they attach to the strengthening of cohesion and solidarity, especially in the south-eastern flank. They expressed the hope that existing problems will be resolved, and that full co-operation among members of the Alliance in all aspects of the defence field would be resumed.*

The Middle East

14 *Having considered the situation in the Middle East* [see pp 120-2], *the allied leaders expressed the hope that efforts aiming at a comprehensive settlement in the area would continue. They urged all parties concerned to redouble their efforts to reach a just and lasting peace.*

Warsaw Pact Capabilities

15 *The efforts by the allies to reduce tensions between East and West, and to discourage attempts to use military power for political ends, can only be successfully pursued in the context of a stable military balance. Such a balance would ensure that they can pursue their* détente *policies in safety and with confidence.*

16 *The allied leaders expressed their concern at the continual expansion of Warsaw Pact offensive capabilities. Faced with this situation, and notwithstanding Soviet statements that these massive military resources are not designed to threaten the security of the allied countries, the latter have no option but to continue two complementary approaches: on the one hand, strengthen their defensive capabilities and, on the other, seek to promote negotiations on arms control and disarmament agreements. The allies will continue to follow the latter approach whenever possible, but progress in this direction necessarily depends on a positive attitude on the part of the Warsaw Pact countries.*

Disarmament

17 *The allied leaders recognised that effective and verifiable limitation of arms, aimed in particular at correcting the existing imbalances in Europe in the conventional field, is an indispensable condition for a durable improvement in East-West relations and for the consolidation of peace.*

18 *The allied leaders discussed the US-USSR strategic arms limitation talks* [SALT, see p 86]. *They welcomed progress made in the negotiations and expressed support for US efforts to conclude an agreement which is responsive to the security interests and concerns of the Alliance and which enhances strategic stability and maintains deterrence.*

19 *With respect to mutual and balanced force reductions* [MBFR, see p 11], *the allies who participate in the negotiations in Vienna reaffirmed their commitment to these negotiations which they first proposed at the ministerial meeting in Reykjavik ten years ago, and their determination to bring them to a successful conclusion. They confirmed their endorsement of the agreed objective of the negotiations to contribute to a more stable relationship and the strengthening of peace and security in Europe. This objective would be achieved by their proposal to create approximate parity in ground forces in the area of reductions through the establishment of a common collective ceiling on ground force manpower and the reduction of the disparity in tanks.*

They called attention to the important new initiative which they introduced into the negotiations on 19 April, to which they now look for a serious and constructive response from the Warsaw Pact participants.[1] *These allies consider that the data discussion in Vienna is an essential element in the efforts towards a satisfactory outcome, and that the clarification of the data base is therefore decisive for substantial progress in the negotiations.*

These allies state that they will propose that a meeting of the negotiations at foreign minister level should be convened at an appropriate date, once substantial progress has been made in the negotiations, and it is clear that a meeting at this level could contribute effectively to the early conclusion of a mutually satisfactory agreement.

20 *The allies welcomed the United Nations special session on disarmament* [see pp 201-4]. *They expressed their resolve to participate in it constructively and their hope that this important conference would produce substantial results. Allied leaders agreed that the destructiveness of modern weaponry, the danger of the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the needs of the developing countries and the requirements of their own societies make co-operation on a wide range of disarmament and arms control issues an urgent task for all countries. Progress in this direction cannot but contribute to international prosperity and make easier the necessary growth in financial resources devoted to development. The allies reaffirmed their determination to persevere, through negotiation, in the pursuit of realistic and verifiable disarmament and arms control measures that enhance stability, reduce force levels and promote security. To these ends, they agreed to make fuller use of the Alliance machinery for thorough consultation on arms control and disarmament issues.*

Security and Defence

21 *Until such time as it proves possible to achieve a satisfactory military balance at lower levels of forces through realistic and verifiable force reduction agreements, the allies will continue to devote all the resources necessary to modernise and strengthen their own forces to the extent required for deterrence and defence. They will continue efforts they have undertaken to preserve and promote the strong industrial and technical capability which is essential*

[1]The new proposals do not change the basis of the long-held Western position, but allow for changes in the timing and nature of the reductions in order to meet previous Warsaw Pact objections

to the defence of the Alliance as a whole. The provision of new and existing generations of weaponry will require the most effective use of defence resources and deepened co-operation in armaments. In this connection, the allies welcomed the steps that had been taken pursuant to the initiative agreed in London on the intensification of the transatlantic dialogue. The allies are convinced that the effectiveness of their forces can be increased through enhanced interoperability and standardisation of equipment and defence equipment planning procedures.

22 *Against the background of the study of long-term trends in East-West relations and other matters affecting Western security, leaders of states taking part in the integrated defence structure of the Alliance considered on 31 May a report on the long-term defence programme prepared by their defence ministers, which had been commissioned at the London summit meeting in May 1977.*

23 *They noted with approval that emphasis was placed in the long-term defence programme on greater co-operative efforts and on the need for NATO co-ordinated defence planning to be projected into the longer term. The leaders of these states endorsed specific programmes approved by defence ministers to improve the readiness of NATO's forces and the mobilisation of reserves, to strengthen NATO's air defences, to counter the electronic warfare threat, to enhance NATO's maritime posture, to provide more effective logistic support for all NATO forces, and to improve NATO's command, control and communications arrangements. They approved programmes designed to accelerate the movement of significant reinforcements to the forward areas in a time of crisis, envisaging the commitment of civil air, sea, land and national infrastructure resources; and they welcomed in particular the United States intention to pre-position heavy equipment for three additional United States divisions in the central region of Allied Command Europe by 1982, recognising the need for European allies to provide the necessary support and other facilities. They also noted with interest the work under way in the Nuclear Planning Group towards meeting needs for the modernisation of theatre nuclear forces.*

24 *These allied leaders noted with satisfaction that almost all countries had indicated their intention to adjust their financial plans for defence in accordance with the aim, established in the 1977 ministerial guidance, of an annual increase in defence expenditure in the region of 3 per cent in real terms* [see p 252, footnote 2]. *They also stressed the importance of achieving the most effective return from resources made available, or planned, for defence by the achievement of a greater degree of co-operation and rationalisation; they welcomed the emphasis placed in the long-term defence programme on this objective.*

25 *They expressed their support for the long-term defence programme forwarded by their defence ministers, as a major contribution towards adapting NATO's forces to the changing needs of the 1980s. They called for vigorous follow-through action to be taken by national authorities and at NATO and international military headquarters. In this connection, Turkey pointed out the importance to her participation of sufficient support from her allies, as well as of the complete removal of existing restrictions on the procurement of defence equipment* [see p 252, footnote 1, col. 2].

26 *In taking these decisions, these allied leaders concluded that, in the absence of equitable arms control and disarmament agreements, a satisfactory balance in strategic, theatre nuclear and conventional terms could only be assured by greater efforts to modernise and strengthen the military capacity of the Alliance. They stressed that the maintenance of security is indispensable for the continued freedom, individual liberty and welfare of their societies and for the furthering of* détente.

EUROGROUP MEETING

The Eurogroup[1] met in ministerial session in Brussels on 17 May. The ministers held a wide-ranging exchange of views on issues of common interest, and reaffirmed their strong support for negotiations aimed at reducing tension. They agreed that equitable and verifiable measures of disarmament and arms control remained an important feature of the Alliance's overall security policy, and stressed their commitment to *détente*.

In this context the ministers reiterated the importance which they attached to a positive outcome of the negotiations on mutual and balanced force reductions (MBFR, see p 11), which would maintain the security of the Alliance. They also expressed their full support for the efforts of the United States, in consultation with its allies, to reach an agreement with the Soviet Union on the limitation of strategic arms (SALT, see p 86). In considering the military balance in Europe, the ministers expressed their concern at the growing military strength of the Warsaw Pact, which was being increased 'far beyond what is needed for defensive purposes'. Against this background, they stressed the need to ensure that NATO maintained an adequate defence capability.

The ministers recalled that the Eurogroup countries concerned had made a substantial contribution to the measures announced last December (see p 12) for short-term improvements in selected areas. They agreed that, while this effort had improved NATO's defence capabilities, the response of the allies to the long-term defence programme (see p 12) was of crucial importance to meet the changing defence needs of the 1980s, and they expressed their resolve to make the fullest possible effort to enable the Alliance to achieve a positive outcome.

It was recalled that Eurogroup had recognised the Independent European Programme Group (IEPG)[2] as the main European forum for improving co-operation in the defence equipment field. The ministers therefore welcomed the fact that discussions had recently taken place between the IEPG countries and the North American allies in the framework of the

[1]The Eurogroup consists of Belgium, Britain, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and Turkey.

[2]The IEPG consists of the Eurogroup nations and France (see p 279, 1976, footnote 2).

NATO Conference of National Armaments Directors on issues related to the transatlantic dialogue on equipment matters.

The ministers considered the reports of the seven sub-groups of Eurogroup,[1] and reaffirmed their belief in the importance of the practical work of these sub-groups with the objective of increasing co-operation and making the best possible use of available resources. They welcomed the continuing progress being made, noting in particular that the countries participating in the F 16 aircraft project intended to undertake joint logistic support arrangements in line with Eurolog's criteria, and that Eurogroup countries had agreed on arrangements for joint jet pilot training.

DEFENCE PLANNING

The NATO Defence Planning Committee met in ministerial session in Brussels on 18 and 19 May. In a communiqué issued at the end of the session, the ministers reaffirmed the political resolve, expressed at the NATO Council summit meeting in May 1977 (see pp 220-1, 1977), to meet the challenge to their countries' security posed by the continuing momentum of the Warsaw Pact build-up. The resulting widening disparity in conventional military capabilities between NATO and the Warsaw Pact had led NATO countries to place emphasis on conventional force improvements, and especially on NATO's ability to maintain a credible deterrent or to respond to an attack after very little warning. They noted with satisfaction that almost all member countries had indicated their intention to adjust their financial plans for defence in accordance with the aim, established in the 1977 ministerial guidance, of an annual increase in defence expenditure in the region of 3 per cent in real terms.[2]

Ministers reviewed the overall security of the Alliance in the light of events which had occurred since their last meeting. In particular, they considered the present state of mutual and balanced force reductions (MBFR, see p 11) negotiations in Vienna, and expressed the hope that the recent Western initiative would meet with a positive response. They reaffirmed the importance they attached to the principle that NATO forces be maintained and not reduced except in the context of a mutual and balanced force reduction agreement with the East, which must not diminish the collective security of the Alliance. They were informed of the latest developments in the strategic arms limitation (SALT, see p 86) negotiations, and reaffirmed the importance of continued close consultation within the Alliance on issues arising from these talks. Ministers reaffirmed their support for measures to achieve effective arms control and disarmament agreements, and expressed the hope that the United Nations special session on disarmament (see pp 201-4) would contribute to progress in this field. However, they stressed that, in the face of growing Warsaw Pact capabilities, negotiations to this end must be backed by an appropriate deterrent and defence posture.

Ministers heard a statement by the chairman of the NATO Military Committee on the latest developments and growth in the military capabilities of the Warsaw Pact and their implications for the military balance with NATO. They expressed their concern that the military power of the Soviet Union continued to grow, 'in particular in its capabilities to deploy new offensive weapon systems against the whole of the European theatre and to project its power, whether directly or by proxy, on a global scale'. However, they noted with approval that important measures had been taken, or were in train, to counter the existing trends in the balance of forces between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Under NATO's established defence planning procedures, they endorsed new force goals for the period 1979-84.

Ministers agreed that there was an urgent need for Portugal and Turkey to receive external assistance for the support and modernisation of their forces. They acknowledged that, despite the scale of the efforts that these two countries were making for their contribution to common defence, it was the responsibility of all the allies to take the necessary steps to provide the essential assistance. Noting the United States Government's initiative aimed at the complete removal of existing United States restrictions on the purchase of defence equipment by Turkey, they emphasised 'the importance for the security and solidarity of the Alliance of a speedy and positive outcome to these initiatives'.[1]

Turning to the long-term defence programme (see p 221, 1977), ministers affirmed that the programme was designed in particular to meet the need for a more comprehensive framework for NATO's defence planning, thus enabling the collective needs of the Alliance to be taken more into account in the development of national plans. Through this greater co-operation and rationalisation, NATO would aim to achieve a significant increase in its defensive capability from the national resources already made available, or planned, for the defence of the Alliance. Within the programme, ministers approved, or endorsed for submission to heads of State or Government, a wide range of measures in selected priority areas. Special importance had been attached to achieving significant improvements in the readiness of NATO forces, particularly their availability and 'survivability'; in the ability of the Alliance to deploy reinforcements in a period of crisis or tension, with complementary improvements to European reserves; in the air defence of NATO territory and sea areas; in countering the electronic warfare threat; and in the provision of effective logistic support for all NATO forces. Special emphasis had also been placed on improving NATO's maritime posture; on NATO's command, control and communications arrangements to facilitate political and military decision-making; and on further rationalisation of NATO's defence efforts. They also endorsed the progress made by the Nuclear Planning Group towards meeting medium- and long-term needs for the modernisation of theatre nuclear forces.

[1] The sub-groups are Eurocom (battlefield communications), Eurolog (logistic co-operation), Eurolongterm (long-term planning), Euromed (medical services), Euronad (equipment collaboration), Eurostructure (force structures) and Euro/Natotraining (co-operative training).

[2] In February Britain announced its intention to meet the NATO 3 per cent target from 1979 in the annual Statement on Defence Estimates (see pp 86-90).

[1] The United States Government has asked Congress to pass legislation which would enable the partial arms embargo, which is currently in operation against Turkey, to be lifted. The United States imposed this embargo following the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974 (see p 370, 1977).

Ministers took note of a report by the Conference of National Armaments Directors on major issues in the field of equipment collaboration – in particular, efforts to improve the standardisation and/or interoperability of defence equipment. They welcomed especially the initiatives of ten member nations in signing an agreement to observe and contribute to a development programme for a highly accurate satellite navigational system. Concerning other efforts to improve standardisation/interoperability of defence equipment, they noted the progress made in developing a transatlantic dialogue between North America and Europe on armaments co-operation, as well as bilateral and multilateral co-operation by Alliance members on specific equipment programmes. They took note of a comprehensive package of proposals for the procurement of a force of E-3 aircraft (see p 191, 1977), and agreed to expedite the review of this proposal through national channels with a view to a final decision on the programme before the autumn.

Finally, ministers stressed that 'the maintenance of security is indispensable for the continued freedom, individual liberty and welfare of their societies, and for the furthering of *détente*'. They acknowledged that the basis of Alliance security lay in the political solidarity and the mutual support among the member nations, and the scale of effort they were prepared to undertake for common defence.

British Foreign Policy

During a debate on foreign affairs in the House of Commons on 7 and 8 June, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Dr David Owen, spoke on aspects of East-West *detente*. His main themes were the response that the West should make to the Soviet build-up of conventional arms, the importance of human rights in the context of *detente*, and, especially, how the elements of East-West tension arising in Africa should be handled. Other topics raised by government spokesmen included the role of the United Nations in peacekeeping and in human rights matters and the progress of the Law of the Sea Conference.

DR OWEN'S SPEECH

Opening the debate (*Hansard*, 7.6.78, cols 209-330 and 8.6.78, cols 384-510) Dr Owen said that 'there must be few occasions in recent history when there has been so much genuine concern about the direction of foreign policy and such a questioning of the relationships between East and West'.

He would speak mainly about Africa, and would relate his remarks to 'the whole nexus of problems, particularly to East-West relationships and what we increasingly describe as *détente*'.

Progress towards *Detente*

Nobody would wish to question 'the fundamental principle underlying *détente* – the need for a closer working relationship between the two major superpowers in the world, the United States and the Soviet Union. ... There can be very few people who would wish to return to the situation that obtained at the time of the Cuban missile crisis....' Although *détente* had made considerable progress, Dr Owen continued, there were still grave dangers in the world, and it was vitally important to reduce these to the bare minimum. He had no doubt that the President of the United States was totally committed in pursuit of that aim and that he would, if possible, make a second strategic arms limitation agreement (see pp 86 and 202) with the Soviet Union before the end of the year. Dr Owen believed that 'the involvement of the United Kingdom Government with the United States and the Soviet Union in pursuing a comprehensive test ban treaty [see pp 86 and 202] is a most important development', and they were near to reaching agreement. He was also certain that there was common ground in 'wishing to make a contribution to the discussions which are now taking place at the special session of the United Nations' (see pp 201-4). Furthermore, Dr Owen was 'convinced that there is common ground in the Soviet Union. It is sincerely and deeply committed to *détente* and to the element of arms negotiations, particularly relating to nuclear questions'.

Conventional Weapons

Dr Owen said, however, that he was 'less convinced yet of the Soviet Union's determination to put the same effort into conventional arms negotiations as it is prepared to put into nuclear arms negotiations'. It was extremely important not to lose sight of this dimension and of the Third World's large budget on conventional weapons. 'The first test of a real commitment to conventional arms control measures will come before the end of the year in the attitude of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact countries to mutual and balanced force reductions' (MBFR – see p 203). In signing an agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany recently, the Soviet Union had indicated that it accepted parity in nuclear and conventional weapons. 'The acceptance of parity underlay SALT I [Strategic Arms Limitation Talks] negotiations and is part of the current SALT II negotiations. The concept of parity is essential in mutual and balanced force reductions.' However, during the time in which there had been discussions on MBFR and the concept of parity, 'there has been an ever-increasing build-up in Soviet conventional weapons'. In that time, 'there has been no evidence of the same commitment to parity and to a readiness to accept arms control methods. . . . That', he said, 'requires a response from the West'. The 'right and necessary response' had been made at the recent NATO meeting (see p 252) when the decision had been taken to make the increased contribution to the defence budget that President Carter had called for at the London NATO summit a year before (see pp 220-

2, 1977). There was 'nothing incompatible between making that response . . . on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the world and the NATO powers contributing to the debate in the United Nations on how we can do something about disarmament and arms control'. It was consistent that 'we should respond to an increase in Soviet Union spending and in the quality of forces but redouble our efforts to achieve balanced arms control measures and reductions in budgets, in numbers of men and in quantity of weapons'.

The question for the West was: 'why the Soviet Union, at a time of genuine commitment to nuclear arms control measures, has allowed this very large increase in its conventional arms in particular and the build-up of forces in Europe'. It did not appear that over the last few years there had been any debate between 'the executive branch of the Government in the Soviet Union and the military about the relative spending and of the competing claims on scarce resources. . . . If there is not a conscious decision, there is at least a seeming acceptance that the military should continue to expand and to go for the weapons systems of its choice and that it should not be faced, as the military has to be faced in most of the Western democracies, with the balance of priorities between spending on defence and spending in other matters. One of the central issues that the Soviet Union will have to face if we are to make serious progress in *détente* is that it will have to come to grips with defence expenditure and with the arguments of its own military.'

Human Rights

Dr Owen did not 'believe that Western democracies should shift one inch from their commitment to human rights'. It had always been inherent in the process of *détente* that there would be no cessation of ideological disputes and arguments. 'There can be no agreement to hold off discussion of central issues such as the weight we respectively give to democracy, to individualism as opposed to collectivism and to dissent as opposed to unanimity.' Human rights was 'one issue which the Soviet Union must start taking more into account', he said. 'If it pursues a policy that ignores the valid concerns of Western democracies about human rights, it will contribute to a build-up of public attitudes in those democracies to which every government will be bound to react. . . . If the public feels that the process of *détente* is all give on our side and that nothing is being returned from the other side, it will soon ensure that we do not make agreements that the Government may wish to make.' Eastern countries would have to recognise the West's concern over human rights as a legitimate part of *détente*. 'But we must recognise that it is only one aspect of *détente* and we should not bring the whole process to a crashing halt because we are not making progress as fast as we may wish in this extremely delicate area. . . .'

Africa

Turning next to areas of tension in Africa (see pp 119-20 and p 202), Dr Owen said that, despite elements of East-West tension there, the Government stood absolutely firm on its belief that African problems were best dealt with by African nations. For this reason it firmly supported the Organisation of African Unity.

On the particular question of Zaire, Dr Owen said that the events of the previous year (see p 185, 1977) had given the West a warning sign. Despite the fact that a great deal of effort had been made, particularly by the Belgian Government, the lack of progress was 'an example of how deep-seated is the problem and how very difficult it will be to establish economic and political stability in Zaire'. He had no doubt that Western states, faced by the danger to the lives of expatriates in Shaba province, had reacted in the right way to the current emergency.[1] Stability would be the first priority now that the emergency was over. In this connection 'a most important event' was the decision of the Zambian President to hold meetings with the Presidents of Zaire and Angola. 'There is no doubt whatsoever that the three countries . . . will have to come together in a political agreement to settle this long-standing problem . . . which has its roots in the Lunda tribe.' The problem could not be resolved against a background of military and economic instability. With regard to economic instability, a meeting was to take place in Brussels, called by the Belgian Government, on 13 and 14 June. The Paris meeting [on 5 June, attended by official representatives from Belgium, Britain, France, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States] had also addressed itself to the question of stabilising the economy of Zaire.

Dr Owen acknowledged that it was one of the greatest problems facing the British Government that in attempting to bring stability to another country, 'we have to live with the government who are there. If the West's support for Zaire . . . was not to be contingent on certain conditions we would be making a great mistake. I believe that our economic support and all other forms of support now must be clearly and deeply contingent on a monitorable plan for economic assistance, economic reform and restructuring in that country to ensure that the money goes for the purpose for which it is allocated and for which it is given, and also that it is accompanied by a readiness to look at political solutions to problems and, if possible, a widening of the decision-making structure and political involvement in that country.' He was 'not in favour of too much paternalism', but, in this case, 'it will be necessary to ensure that there is an agreed economic plan which is kept to and a degree of political commitment . . . '.

This was one reason why he was against seeing these issues as an East-West struggle. If the West saw things in that light, it would be 'dragged in day by day to supporting purely a particular regime or a particular group of individuals, and [we would] lose sight of our central objective which is to support Zaire and the stability of Africa in that region'.

[1] Among the first reactions to the emergency (see footnote on p 202) had been the dispatch of troops to the town of Kolwezi in Shaba province, where the danger to European expatriates was greatest, by the French and Belgian Governments, acting at the request of the Zaire Government. The British Government, viewing the operation as a humanitarian one, had assisted, with the full agreement of the Zaire Government, by providing aircraft equipped for medical evacuation. In the event these had not been needed. The United States Government had contributed by providing transport aircraft. Following the success of the operation, the French and Belgian Governments had announced their intention to withdraw their troops. At the request of the Zaire Government, the United States Government agreed to help with the transport by air of troops from other African countries to maintain security in the province.

As for the question of military intervention, Dr Owen believed that 'it is reasonable for troops from other African countries to be called in by other governments if they wish to do so'. However, he had great difficulty with suggestions that had been made with regard to the creation of a pan-African force. He thought that 'any questions which are being asked about military support there are more likely to come not from Africa collectively but from the region. . . . There is no African country which will put troops at the disposal of any country. They will judge each one on its merits.' The belief that a permanent military defence structure for Africa could be built up by the West had created difficulties over the last few weeks. 'Now, by standing back a little, let us hope that we can provide a sensible security structure which will be seen to be supporting the Zaire Government and not polarising the issue into East-West relations. . . .' The Organisation of African Unity had attempted mediation and conciliation in the past and that should be encouraged again now. Concerned involvement from the West was helpful to Africa. 'If we see it as being to help Africans solve African problems, I believe that it will meet with a response. But if it is seen as the West intervening in Africa, I believe that we shall not get the sort of response that is wanted.'

Dr Owen recalled that over the question of Ethiopia and Somalia he had been urged in some quarters to intervene with arms supplies to Somalia. However he 'stood firm by the OAU principle that we should respect the territorial integrity of the countries and that we should not put ourselves on the side of those who would run down the easy route of trying to change the map of Africa by force'. It had greatly strengthened the West's ability to respond in Zaire that they had not placed themselves on the wrong side in the Ogaden dispute.

He said he did not take a defeatist view of the West's influence in Africa. 'We shall carry influence in Africa by sticking to principle.' It would be achieved by pursuing the negotiated path to independence in Namibia and Rhodesia, by 'refusing to simplify extremely complex issues and by being prepared to take one's stand on principles'.

He acknowledged that because Britain did not supply arms to certain countries, while other countries were prepared to do so, a measure of influence was lost. In those cases, he said, 'we have to redouble our political efforts. It is wise for us to put economic aid into these countries.' It was no matter for apologies that Britain had an aid budget for Mozambique, for example. 'It is a great mistake to believe that one influences countries by cutting oneself off from them.' Dr Owen contrasted Britain's aid budget favourably with that of the Soviet Union, which was less than 0·1 per cent of Soviet GNP and had declined since 1973-74. The Soviet Union was not making friends in many developing countries.

In conclusion, Dr Owen said that there was 'no simple, easy, one-paper policy for dealing with Africa'. But 'if we apply principle, . . . we shall have a policy for Africa which will enrich Africa, . . . and in the process increase the standing of Britain, increase our export effort and our industrial involvement in that continent, and bring greater peace to the world'.

OPPOSITION VIEWS AND GOVERNMENT RESPONSES

The chief Opposition spokesman on foreign affairs, Mr John Davies, challenged Dr Owen's view that the Soviet Union was committed to the arms negotiations aspects of *détente* (*Hansard*, 7.6.78, cols 230-1). Over many years the Soviet Union had been concerned with achieving superiority or equivalence in both strategic and conventional arms so that in any negotiations it could argue from a position of strength. Having achieved that position, of being assured of at least equivalence, disarmament became desirable from its point of view.

For the Liberal Party, Mr Jeremy Thorpe said that he was less optimistic than Dr Owen about political will for *détente* on the part of the Soviet Union (*Hansard*, 8.6.78, col 426).

Along with other official Opposition spokesmen, Mr Davies criticised the Government for failing to adopt a more positive and determined position with regard to the actions of the Soviet Union in the fields of conventional weapons, human rights and Africa.

For the Government, Mr Evan Luard, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, replied that the Prime Minister, Mr James Callaghan, had, in his main statement to the NATO meeting in Washington, 'expressed downright criticisms of the Soviet Union' on each of these three scores (*Hansard*, 8.6.78, col 396).

With regard to Africa, Opposition spokesmen suggested that the European Community could achieve a greater involvement in the political stability of the countries it dealt with through the Lomé Convention or its association arrangements. A 'firefighting force' might be formed within the framework of discussions between the European Community and the African members of the Lomé Convention, said Mr Davies (*Hansard*, 7.6.78, cols 236-7).

For the Government, Dr Owen replied that such a proposal would be strongly resisted by other members of the European Community. The Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Mr Frank Judd, said that to promote a force of the kind proposed by the Opposition would be to intervene in Africa, and 'would bring us into conflict with the policies and principles of the Organisation of African Unity'. It would 'increase the element of East-West confrontation . . . , cut across the African view . . . that African problems are best dealt with by African nations . . . and prejudice our relations with the African states (*Hansard*, 8.6.78, col 508).

For the Liberal Party, Mr Jeremy Thorpe said that Britain should bring pressure to bear in the United Nations to take up the United States suggestion for a peacekeeping reserve force (*Hansard*, 8.6.78, col 432). Developing countries were coming increasingly to prefer an international force to protect their security to a force from one of the big powers. This might be the soultion for some of the troubled parts of Africa.

OTHER TOPICS

Mr Luard spoke of three other spheres, advances in which could ultimately be of enormous benefit.

These were the role of the United Nations, the Law of the Sea Conference and human rights (*Hansard*, 8.6.78, cols 398-411).

United Nations

Given that the United Nations was dependent on moral persuasion rather than on enforcement in influencing the conduct of states, he said, 'we need not be too despondent about . . . its record of performance so far'. Perhaps its most important technique had been the development of peace-keeping forces. But more was needed. The organisation needed to improve its capacity for crisis-anticipation. One step forward might be to have regular meetings of the Security Council to keep areas of tension under review, instead of waiting until war had broken out. But even that was not enough. The Council needed to develop techniques for the peaceful settlement of disputes. Such developments would be an important complement to discussions of arms reductions.

The Law of the Sea

He referred to the slow rate of progress in the Law of the Sea Conference (see p 213), but said it was not true that no progress had been made. There was now a draft of a complete treaty, even if it was only a negotiating text. On the majority of subjects there was a considerable measure of agreement. There remained differences on the system of exploiting resources lying in the international area of the oceans, but even here, there was a measure of consensus that there should be an international seabed authority to oversee such exploitation. There had been some progress at the recent meeting in Geneva, but there was a need for progress on remaining points in the near future: the patience of some states would not last indefinitely.

Human Rights

On human rights, Mr Luard acknowledged that there were difficult problems connected with the importance of maintaining good relations with other governments. The Government would take account of views expressed in the House of Commons; but, he continued, 'I do not undertake that we shall cut off arms supplies immediately to any country where there are reports of violations of human rights'. He spoke of the issue of human rights in parts of the world other than Europe. It was gratifying that a number of countries had supported the Government's protest to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights about violations of human rights in Cambodia. Many people believed that the Commission was biased or ineffective, He believed that there were some signs that the Commission was becoming less selective in its approach. Further, there were suggestions, supported by the Government, for more frequent meetings of the Commission, for regional commissions of human rights in Asia and Africa, and for the appointment of a United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. All these were signs of movement in the right direction.

In all three spheres he had dealt with, said Mr Luard, 'the Government have attempted to make the United Nations the centrepiece of their foreign policy.'

Anglo-Romanian Relations

STATE VISIT BY THE ROMANIAN PRESIDENT

President Nicolae Ceausescu of Romania paid a state visit to Britain from 13 to 16 June, staying at Buckingham Palace as a guest of the Queen. It was the first state visit to Britain by the President of a Warsaw Pact country. Mr Ceausescu held official talks with the British Prime Minister, Mr James Callaghan, and a joint statement was issued. The statement reviewed Anglo-Romanian relations, especially trade and industrial co-operation, and reflected discussions that had been held on current international questions. Various agreements were signed by the two Governments and some important agreements were also concluded between commercial organisations of the two countries during the visit, notably between the British and Romanian aeronautical industries.

A significant earlier event in Anglo-Romanian relations had been the visit to Romania of the then British Prime Minister, Mr (now Sir) Harold Wilson in 1975 (see pp 396-7, 1975). Other visits in both directions have taken place in the intervening period (see p 461, 1977), including visits to Romania by the Secretary of State for Trade, Mr Edmund Dell, and Mr Gerald Kaufman, Minister of State for Industry, both in March 1978, which had emphasised the growing value of commercial links between the two countries. The total value of Anglo-Romanian trade rose from £99 million in 1976 to £133 million in 1977.

Mr Ceausescu, who was accompanied by his wife and a number of senior ministers, undertook several ceremonial engagements during his stay. The official talks with Mr Callaghan and other government ministers took place on 14 and 15 June and culminated in the signing of a joint statement. Several agreements on industrial and cultural matters were signed at the same time.

The text of the joint statement is summarised below.

Anglo-Romanian Relations

The two sides reaffirmed the importance of the joint declaration signed in Bucharest in 1975. They noted with satisfaction the excellent progress that had been made in the development of Anglo-Romanian relations and co-operation since that time and agreed that the current state visit represented a further important stage in this process. They agreed to work for the intensification of their bilateral relations, a process in which meetings at the highest level would continue to be a decisive factor. The two sides expressed their satisfaction at the growth in trade and co-operation, and reaffirmed their determination to work towards raising by 1980 the annual volume of two-way trade to two and a half times the level of 1974.

Resolve was expressed that the state visit should mark an important step in the development of economic relations. The two sides stressed the need for their respective commercial enterprises to utilise to the full the potential for bilateral trade, economic and industrial co-operation and collaboration in third markets between the two countries, and agreed to support the activities of the joint Anglo-Romanian governmental commission directed to this aim. They expressed their desire for a successful outcome of multilateral trade negotiations (see p 149).

The two Governments signed memorandums of understanding on co-operation in the aerospace industry, and technological co-operation in matters concerned with exploration for and production of offshore oil and gas. They noted with satisfaction the signature of agreements between the Romanian aeronautical industry and British Aerospace and Rolls-Royce (see below), and the documents signed between Romanian economic organisations and British groups, including Imperial Chemical Industries, Northern Engineering Industries, the Shell International Petroleum Company and the National Coal Board. A revised memorandum was signed covering future arrangements for bilateral transport co-operation. The two sides signed a record of understanding continuing for a further year the scientific and technological co-operation in agriculture and food processing initiated in 1976, and noted the conclusion of certain agreements on scientific and technical co-operation between research institutions in the two countries. They also signed a convention on legal and commercial matters.

The two sides confirmed their desire to extend and diversify cultural exchanges. To this end they signed an agreement on co-operation in the field of education, science and culture, and proceeded to an exchange of letters on the establishment of cultural centres in each other's country. They agreed upon the convening of an Anglo-Romanian 'round table' to discuss problems of common interest. They also expressed their desire to encourage the contribution made by young people to the development of friendly relations between Britain and Romania.

International Questions

Both sides expressed their concern over the fragility of the *détente* process, and emphasised the need for further efforts to ensure that this process is continued until it becomes irreversible. In this connection they reaffirmed the importance of full implementation by all participating states of the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (see pp 307-12, 1975). They also stressed the need for the extension of those provisions to all other continents. Both sides expressed their disappointment that the results of the recent Belgrade meeting (see pp 115-17) were less satisfactory than had been hoped. They agreed on the importance of careful preparation of the next follow-up meeting in Madrid in 1980. They emphasised that progress in the political field must be accompanied by progress in the military aspects of security. The two sides agreed that the development of good relations between the countries of the Balkans would contribute to the strengthening of security and co-operation in Europe.

Both sides underlined the need to act together to help achieve more equitable international economic relations which should be conducive to the elimination of underdevelopment, to the expansion of international trade, and to the stabilisation of prices for raw materials, and which should allow all states to benefit from the achievements of science and technology. They welcomed efforts to achieve a healthier level of world economic activity.

Both sides noted the urgent necessity of elaborating an agreed strategy leading ultimately to general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. They attached great importance to the United Nations General Assembly's special session on disarmament (see pp 201-4). They agreed to act firmly for the exclusion from international life of the threat or use of force.

The two sides recorded their broad agreement on the steps needed to achieve peace in the Middle East, and on the need for negotiated settlements of problems existing among African states. They reaffirmed their support for the transfer of power to the African majority in Rhodesia; they expressed their support for the right of the people of Namibia to national sovereignty; and they stressed the need for the elimination of racial discrimination in South Africa.

In conclusion, they agreed to act to strengthen the role of the United Nations, and to intensify Anglo-Romanian collaboration within that body and other international organisations.

AEROSPACE AGREEMENT

Agreements were signed during the visit on 15 June of Mr Ceausescu to British Aerospace, Filton (Bristol), on a phased programme of manufacture and assembly under licence of complete BAC One-Eleven aircraft in Romanian factories, in parallel with continuing production of these aircraft in Britain. The programme embraces about 80 aircraft over a period of 15 years.

Rolls-Royce has also negotiated an agreement covering the joint manufacture of some 225 Spey 512 aero-engines for civilian use over a period of 15 years to power the Romanian-built One-Eleven. About half the parts by value for the engines covered by the agreement will eventually be produced in Romania, where they will also be assembled and tested.

This large-scale, long-term programme is the biggest exercise in industrial and technological transfer in the history of transport aircraft, and the biggest-ever co-operative venture in the long-interlinked aeronautical histories of Britain and Romania. The first such link began with the acquisition by Romania of a Bristol Boxkite in 1911, while the modern association began in 1968 with the purchase by Romania of six BAC One-Eleven 400 aircraft for the state-owned airline, TAROM, for which a further order – for five of the larger One-Eleven 500 aircraft – was placed in 1975.

Solomon Islands Independence

On 7 July the Solomon Islands became a constitutional monarchy with the Queen as head of State, and joined the Commonwealth as its thirty-seventh member. At the independence celebrations the Queen was represented by the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester and the British Government was represented by Lord Shepherd, a former Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House of Lords. Mr Baddeley Devesi, who is a Solomon Islander, has been appointed Governor-General.

The Territory

The Solomon Islands form a 1,500-km-long archipelago lying to the east of Papua New Guinea in the western Pacific. Over half the population (some 197,000 in 1976) live on the islands of Malaita and Guadalcanal, where Honiara, the capital and largest township, is situated. The rest of the population is concentrated in the New Georgia Islands, San Cristobal, Choiseul and Santa Isabel. About 90 per cent of the population are Melanesians. The remainder include Polynesians, Micronesians, Europeans, Chinese and people of other racial origins.

The first recorded European contact with the islands took place in 1568, and from the eighteenth century many explorers visited the islands, followed by whalers and missionaries. In the mid-nineteenth century the development of sugar plantations in Queensland and Fiji led to a campaign of labour recruitment in the Solomon and other island groups. The abuses to which this led provoked retaliation from the islanders, and massacres of Europeans and natives steadily mounted until Britain established a Protectorate over the Southern Solomon Islands in 1893. Further islands were added in 1898 and 1899 and others were transferred in 1900 by treaty from Germany to Britain. In the second world war Japanese troops invaded the islands, occupying the Central Solomons for three years. The Protectorate became the centre of battle between the Allies and the Japanese for three years, during which time the Solomon Islanders showed outstanding loyalty and courage in helping the allied forces.

In 1953 the first local council was set up in Malaita, followed shortly after by others in Guadalcanal and San Cristobal and subsequently throughout the Protectorate. In 1960 nominated Legislative and Executive Councils were established and elected members were introduced into the Legislative Council in 1964. In 1970 the Legislative and Executive Councils were replaced by a single Governing Council with executive committees and an elected majority for the first time. A ministerial system of government was created in August 1974 and internal self-government introduced in 1976. In September 1977 at a full constitutional conference in London, agreement was reached on the broad provisions of an independence constitution and on the date for independence (see pp 371-2, 1977).

The Economy

The main natural resources of the islands are fish, timber, copra and minerals. These, with the exception of copra, have only recently been exploited and all possess great potential for development. In recent years considerable survey work, together with research investigations, has been undertaken in order to identify fully the country's resource wealth and to provide the information necessary for economic planning. Using such information, successive national development plans have aimed at developing these resources with a view to broadening the country's economic base. Thus, while considerable emphasis is still placed on copra production – the traditional mainstay of the economy – agriculture is being diversified, including the development of livestock farming, with the aim of meeting the domestic needs as well as producing more for export, while the forestry and fishery sectors are now contributing considerably to national wealth. The Government is also anxious to expand commercial and industrial operations in the islands, and favours the moderate development of the tourism industry.

Development Assistance

Development expenditure in recent years has been financed largely by British aid funds. Including technical co-operation funds and budgetary assistance, Britain provided the Solomon Islands with aid funds totalling some £32·4 million between 1972 and 1976, most of it in grant form. Of this, nearly £9·4 million was made available in 1976.

Financial assistance has been used in support of programmes of public works, including the provision of electricity and water supplies, road building and the improvement of housing, education and medical care; fisheries, forestry, cattle and coconut development; and an intensive programme of malaria eradication.

Britain will continue to provide aid to an independent Solomon Islands, having agreed in January 1977 to provide up to £18 million in development grants for the first four years following independence. Further development aid will include £5 million in the form of special project grants and up to £3 million in budgetary assistance. In addition, Britain has secured an increase from £4 million to £6 million in the allocation to the Solomon Islands from the European Development Fund over a period of five years.

Technical co-operation funds, which amounted to £2·4 million in 1976, will continue to be provided, and will be used to supply British experts and advisers in support of development activities and training facilities for Solomon Islands students and trainees in Britain.

For further information see COI reference pamphlet, *Solomon Islands,* R6036/78.

Shorter Notes

ASSURANCE TO NON-NUCLEAR STATES

Following the references to security assurances for non-nuclear states made by the Prime Minister, Mr

James Callaghan, in his speech to the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament (see pp 202-3), the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Dr David Owen, has made a further statement. He said: 'We are now ready to give the following assurance to non-nuclear weapon states which are parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty [see pp 621-7, 1968] or other international binding commitments not to manufacture or acquire nuclear explosive devices: Britain undertakes not to use nuclear weapons against such states except in the case of an attack on the United Kingdom, its dependent territories, its armed forces or its allies by such a state in association or alliance with a nuclear weapon state' (*Hansard*, 27.6.78, written answers, cols 528-9).

Britain's Trade Within the European Community in 1977

Britain's visible trade balance with the other member countries of the European Community improved in both 1976 and 1977; the deficit fell by £404 million in 1977 to £1,678 million. Exports to the other member countries in 1977 grew nearly half as fast again as imports, by 31 per cent against 22 per cent. In 1977 the value of exports was 88 per cent of the value of imports, the highest proportion since 1971.

Information on Britain's trade within the Community in 1977 (see also pp 125-30) was published in *Trade and Industry* on 19 May. Table 1 shows Britain's balance of trade with the other member countries of the Community over the period 1970-77; Table 2 relates this balance to the balances with other areas of the world and to the total balance of trade.

Table 1

United Kingdom Balance of Trade with the Rest of the European Community

£ million, balance of payments basis (percentage change on previous year in parentheses)

	Exports f.o.b.	Imports f.o.b.	Visible balance
1970	2,347	2,303	+44
1971	2,511 (+7)	2,696 (+17)	−185
1972	2,835 (+13)	3,419 (+27)	−584
1973	3,943 (+39)	5,125 (+50)	−1,182
1974	5,581 (+42)	7,608 (+48)	−2,027
1975	6,273 (+12)	8,678 (+14)	−2,405
1976	9,027 (+44)	11,109 (+28)	−2,082
1977	11,855 (+31)	13,533 (+22)	−1,678

TRADE BY COMMODITY

A commodity breakdown of trade is not available on a balance of payments basis, but the commodities contributing to the movements in the overall deficit can be seen from the 'crude' balance of trade, that is the difference between exports f.o.b. and imports c.i.f., shown in Table 3. Although this is not a good measure of the balance of trade in goods because, among other things, of differences in valuation, these crude balances provide a reasonable indication of the trends in the balances through time. There is also a discontinuity in the statistics, mainly on food, as a result of the change in mid-1976 in the method of payment of monetary compensatory amounts (MCAs).[1]

The main change between 1976 and 1977 by commodity category was the substantial turnround from deficit to surplus in the crude trade balance for fuels, reflecting sharply increased exports of crude oil. There were also small improvements in an increased surplus for the 'other semi-manufactures' group and a reduced deficit in 'other manufactures'. These improvements were partly offset by a marked increase in the deficit in machinery and transport equipment, which was more than accounted for by a sharp deterioration in the deficit on passenger motor cars, and by a smaller worsening in chemicals.

[1]Collected by importers prior to May 1976 and generally included in valuation of imports. Since May 1976, paid directly to the exporter in his own country.

Food and Live Animals

Unlike the earlier years of membership, when movements in Britain's crude trade balance with the rest of the Community in food and live animals were major contributors to changes in the total balance of trade with the Community, in 1977, for the second successive year, the trade deficit in food and live animals changed only slightly – from £1,423 million in 1976 to £1,444 million in 1977. This movement resulted from a 45 per cent rise in the value of exports and a 14 per cent increase in imports.

The balance of trade in dairy produce improved by £38 million in 1977. Within this commodity group, the value of exports of dried milk and cream was halved, while exports of butter fell slightly. This latter fall was more than offset by a £59 million fall in imports, mainly as a result of reduced demand, and rising home production. The deficit on trade in cereals improved by £55 million in 1977, mainly owing to an increase in exports of grain and cereal preparations. A halving of imports of maize from £135 million in 1976 to £75 million in 1977 was compensated for by increased imports of barley from Community countries and maize from third countries. Part of the increase in the deficit in fruit and vegetables resulted from increased arrivals of fresh fruit from France and Italy. The value of deliveries of French apples increased from £40 million in 1976 to £53 million in 1977, and Italy made higher deliveries of both soft and stone fruits.

Imports of sugar from the Community increased from £84 million in 1976 to £101 million in 1977.

Exports of live animals increased in 1977, mainly reflecting higher deliveries of cattle to the Irish Republic, up from a low £5 million in 1976 to £30 million in 1977, and to France. The fall in imports of cattle from the Irish Republic for fattening in Britain in 1976, as a result of drought, was reversed in 1977 with the return to more normal climatic conditions.

Basic Materials

Following a worsening in the crude deficit in 1976, there was some small improvement in 1977, as exports rose by 17 per cent and imports by 11 per cent.

Table 2

United Kingdom Balance of Trade by Area

£ million, balance of payments basis

	Rest of European Community	Rest of Western Europe	North America	Other developed countries	Oil exporting countries	Rest of world	Total
1970	+44	+178	—484	+149	—114	+202	—25
1971	—185	+118	—172	+223	—188	+483	+279
1972	—584	—37	—79	—154	—131	+284	+701
1973	—1,182	—277	—278	—205	—329	—83	—2,354
1974	—2,027	—352	—696	+101	—2,216	—5	—5,195
1975	—2,405	—55	—659	—14	—701	+629	—3,205
1976	—2,082	+5	—805	+15	—697	+54	—3,510
1977	—1,678	+236	—734	—367	+893	+38	—1,612

Table 3

United Kingdom Crude Trade Balance* with the Rest of the European Community by Commodity

£ million, overseas statistics basis

Industry group	1975	1976	1977
Food and live animals	—1,470	—1,423	—1,444
of which			
Meat	—310	—336	—401
Dairy products	—412	—324	—286
Cereals	—261	—360	—305
Fruit and vegetables	—171	—210	—245
Sugar	—152	—58	—70
Beverages and tobacco	—66	—73	—76
Basic materials	+17	—32	—17
Fuel	—315	—238	+119
of which			
Petroleum and petroleum products	—345	—254	+120
Vegetable oils	—30	—30	—30
Chemicals	—6	—62	—109
of which			
Plastics	—63	—134	—160
Other semi-manufactures	—180	+119	+162
of which			
Precious stones	+146	+289	+354
Iron and steel	—315	—317	—278
Machinery and transport equipment	—226	—430	—629
of which			
Machinery	—67	—64	—70
Office machines	—15	—18	—22
Electrical machinery	—50	—51	—73
Road vehicles	—64	—186	—460
Miscellaneous manufactures	—132	—91	—48
Other goods	+24	—1	+39
Total	—2,383	—2,261	—2,033

*Difference between exports f.o.b. (free on board) and imports c.i.f. (cost, insurance and freight). Adjustments have to be made to both exports and imports to bring them onto a balance of payments basis in order to arrive at the visible balances shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Fuels

Over 95 per cent of Britain's trade in fuels with other member countries of the Community consists of trade in petroleum and petroleum products. The improvement of £374 million between 1976 and 1977 in the crude trade balance in these products led to a swing from a deficit of £254 million to a surplus of £120 million: exports rose by 62 per cent and imports by 7 per cent. The major factor in this rise was the increase in crude oil exports from £96 million in 1976 to £550 million in 1977.

Manufactured Goods

Although Britain's crude trade deficit in manufactures with other members of the Community increased by £161 million in 1977, the export/import ratio was unchanged as exports and imports each rose by 28 per cent. Exports of chemicals rose by 28 per cent, slightly less than the rise in imports, the crude trade deficit increasing by about £50 million. Within this group the deficit in plastics continued to grow in 1977, although the export/import ratio was little changed. The growth in both exports and imports of plastics was sharply reduced in 1977, following a strong recovery in 1976 from the depressed levels of 1975.

Exports and imports of other semi-manufactures both rose by around 26 per cent, and the surplus increased. This was more than accounted for by an improved balance of trade in precious stones with the value of diamond exports up from £468 million in 1976 to £623 million in 1977, mainly to Belgium/Luxembourg. There was also an improvement in the trade balance with the other members of the Community in iron and steel in 1977, the deficit falling by £39 million to £278 million, and the export/import ratio at 51 per cent compared with 43 per cent in 1976. In contrast, trade in textile yarns and similar products and rubber manufactures moved adversely.

The crude trade deficit for machinery and transport equipment increased by some £200 million in 1977. The deficit in mechanical machinery was virtually unchanged. Exports and imports of office machines and automatic data processing equipment, including statistical machines, both rose strongly leaving the balance little changed. The growth of exports of electrical machinery between 1976 and 1977 exceeded that of imports, but this was insufficient to prevent a further increase in the crude trade deficit. There was a sharp increase in the deficit of £274 million on road vehicles, as a rise of one-third in exports contrasted with an increase of over one-half in imports. Within this group, exports of passenger motor cars amounted to £232 million (131,000 units) in 1977 compared with £171 million (129,000 units) in 1976, while imports were £982 million (483,000 units) in 1977 against £643 million (362,000 units) in 1976. There were, however, small improvements in the surpluses on lorries, road vehicles other than motor vehicles, and parts for motor vehicles. The other transport equipment category, which includes ships and aircraft, and where trade often moves erratically, was in balance in 1977, following a large deficit in 1976.

The deficit on trade in other manufactures (which are mainly consumer goods) decreased again in 1977 as exports rose by 37 per cent and imports by 29 per cent. Within the group there was a further improvement in the surplus on clothing, while the deficit on furniture was virtually eliminated.

Micro-electronics

Recent announcements concerning government support for the development of micro-electronics technology in Britain are described below. They include: the setting up of a new National Enterprise Board subsidiary; training and other support; and a study of the social and economic implications of the technology by the Central Policy Review Staff.

NEW NEB COMPANY

On 30 May the National Enterprise Board (NEB) announced plans to set up a subsidiary company to develop and produce advanced micro-electronic circuits.

[Electronic circuits, which were formerly made by connecting together individual components, can now be manufactured as a unit known as a 'micro-circuit' on the surface of a 'chip' of silicon. Developments in this technology have been rapid over the past 15 years or so; the number of components which can be placed on a 'chip' less than a quarter of an inch (0·635 centimetre) square has increased from 10 to 100,000 and is still increasing, while the cost per component has fallen from about £5 to less than 0·1p.

The 'micro-processor' is the form of micro-circuit 'chip' which can contain all the logic circuits of a small computer. It offers automation on an unprecedented scale, with machines increasingly being able to take over the simpler jobs in industry and commerce. The micro-processor can perform mathematical calculations; it can be programmed to carry out simple operations unsupervised as in a numerically-controlled machine tool; and it can manipulate information as a word-processor.

Some of the more obvious uses to which micro-electronic technology is currently put include pocket calculators, digital watches and video tape recorders. Applications will shortly be seen in domestic appliances such as washing machines and cookers; there are whole ranges of other possible applications including car ignition systems and telecommunications. The technology also has an important role in the manufacturing process itself – for example, in the design of assembly-line equipment and the control of process plant.]

The Government has approved an investment of between £20 million and £30 million over the first few years of the project, which was proposed to the NEB by a group of British and United States micro-electronics engineers working in California and which is expected to create about 4,000 jobs over the first three or four years. Capital for the new subsidiary is to come both from the NEB and the

group of engineers, who will move to Britain to set it up.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Speaking at an Institute of Production Engineers seminar on micro-electronics in Birmingham on 25 May, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Industry, Mr Leslie Huckfield, said that the Department of Industry had long recognised the importance of micro-processors in an industrial context. The various industry requirements boards (see pp 355-6, 1977) had more recently come to involve manufacturing industry directly with government research establishments in project work; and there were schemes of financial assistance available, including the product and process development (PPD) scheme (see p 309, 1977), which it was hoped would encourage the design and production by British manufacturers of more equipment incorporating micro-processors.

GOVERNMENT STRATEGY

The Government has identified three separate problems in developing its strategy on micro-electronics. The first is that of developing a manufacturing base in Britain for the supply of the nation's own demand for 'chips' and to this end the Government has approved the NEB's proposal to establish a new manufacturing company in this field (see above). The Government is also studying, with the help of a National Economic Development Office working party, various forms of assistance for the manufacture of 'standard' and 'special' (or 'custom') chips by companies already established in Britain, and for the provision of design facilities for the users of standard chips.

The second part of the Government's strategy is the encouragement of British industry to take full advantage of the new technology and to apply it fully in a wide range of possible uses. To consider the very great opportunities which exist for British manufacturers to cut their own costs and to develop and supply a whole range of consumer and capital goods using micro-electronics, the Advisory Council on Applied Research and Development has set up a separate working party in addition to the Menter working party (see below), whose report should be available before the summer recess, when it will be studied urgently by the Department of Industry and other departments.

The third part of the strategy is concerned with how society will adapt itself to the new opportunities and how it will meet the changes, in employment and elsewhere, flowing inevitably from the ever-widening application of micro-electronics. It is to identify these wider implications that Mr Callaghan has called on the Central Policy Review Staff (CPRS) to work closely with the Menter working party in its work of assessing the impact on employment and the economy generally (see below). The Department of Employment's Unit for Manpower Studies, on which the CPRS can call, is already embarking on a study of the manpower effects of micro-electronics, looking at the job opportunities and retraining needs, as well as the displacement of old skills and the loss of jobs.

Support Scheme

On 4 July the Secretary of State for Industry, Mr Eric Varley, announced[1] an initial £15-million support scheme – the Micro-processor Application Project (MAP) – under the Science and Technology Act 1965 to encourage British industry to apply micro-processor techniques to a wide range of products and production processes. Assistance under the scheme, which came into operation on the same date, will be provided on a selective basis and will be available to all sectors of manufacturing industry in Britain; it will complement other existing Government support for the micro-electronics industry and for computer hardware and software (including computer and micro-processor applications in business and commerce). The terms of support under the scheme will take account of weaknesses in British industry which are clearly emerging from discussions of the Government's industrial strategy (see pp 59-60). Assistance will be available under the following categories:

Industrial Awareness and Training: In the context of the MAP, the Department of Industry will be making every effort to alert industry to the potential of micro-processors but in addition will utilise the services of existing industry training bodies and educational institutes. The Department will expand and underwrite appropriate training courses with national coverage including the provision of demonstration equipment and by subsidising the attendance by representatives of manufacturing industry.

Feasibility Studies and Consultancy Support: A refund of up to £2,000 of the cost of consultancy work will be made to companies seeking professional advice on the potential for micro-processor installations and processes within their own manufacturing units or for the incorporation of micro-processors in their end-product design.

Micro-processor Application Support: This will take the form of financial support for actual projects involving the application of micro-processors, whether or not preceded by specific consultancy assistance (see above). Assistance will be available both for application of micro-processors in end-products and for their use in production processes.

Details of the training courses and further announcements concerning extensions or modifications to the scheme will be made in due course.

CPRS Study

It was announced in a statement from 10 Downing Street on 19 June that the Prime Minister, Mr James Callaghan, had instructed the CPRS to take the lead in studying the social and economic implications of micro-electronic technology. The work of the CPRS in this field would complement that already being carried out by a working party of the Advisory Council on Applied Research and Development (ACARD) under the chairmanship of Sir James Menter (see p 34, 1977), which was looking at the social, educational and manpower consequences of new technologies generally – micro-electronics being the most important of these.

Mr Callaghan said that the rapid development of

[1] *Hansard*, 4.7.78, written answers, cols 111-13.

micro-electronics was one of the most significant opportunities of the time and presented Britain with a number of challenging issues. 'It will have the deepest significance in the 1980s for the way in which the skills of the British people are used', he said, and he wished to 'ensure that within the present state of knowledge we are fully aware of all the ramifications in reaching our conclusions on the social and economic consequences of this technology. There is a role for the Government, as well as for industry, in ensuring that the full benefits are realised while minimising the adverse effects of the changes that will take place.'

The task of the CPRS would be to act as a focus within government for dealing with the wider implications of the technology and to ensure that the ACARD proposals were fully and promptly considered when its report was published in the autumn of 1978. The CPRS would be responsible for ensuring that all government departments concerned were fully aware of the nature of the problems and the range of possible solutions.

Road Accident Statistics

Casualties to users of the roads in Great Britain rose by 3 per cent in 1977 to 348,186, but remained below the numbers recorded in the early 1970s, according to detailed provisional statistics issued by the Department of Transport on 4 May. Great Britain's road safety record compares very favourably with that of other developed countries.

In 1977 deaths on the roads rose by 1 per cent to 6,613, while serious injuries increased by 3 per cent to 81,722 and slight injuries by 2 per cent to 259,851. Between 1970 and 1977 road casualties fell by 4 per cent, although during this period a 26 per cent rise in motor traffic was recorded.

The table gives an analysis of casualties by types of road user. Car and taxi mileage increased by 3 per cent in 1977, but casualties to users of these vehicles rose by only 2 per cent to 151,593. Goods vehicle traffic grew by 3 per cent in 1977 and public service vehicle traffic by 1 per cent, but casualties to users of both types of vehicle fell, by 4 and 3 per cent respectively. The fastest rate of growth of traffic – 7 per cent – was for two-wheeled motor vehicles, and traffic and casualties for this category have now returned to the levels last reached in the mid-1960s. Although pedal cycle casualties grew by 1 per cent, the number of child casualties in this category fell by 3 per cent to 9,709. Pedestrian casualties rose for the first time since 1972, with casualties to adults rising by 3 per cent to 38,988 and casualties to children by 5 per cent to 30,383. (A new £1 million national publicity campaign to help to reduce child pedestrian casualties was announced on 22 May by the Secretary of State for Transport, Mr William Rodgers.)

[The most recent international comparisons of road accident statistics prepared by the Department of Transport[1] indicate that, for the year 1975, road deaths per person and per vehicle were lower in Great Britain than in virtually all the other developed countries considered.]

Shorter Notes

INDUSTRY AND EDUCATION

The Department of Industry is to establish an Industry and Education Unit (IEU) to co-ordinate the Department's activities to improve liaison between industry and schools. Announcing this in London on 27 June, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department of Industry, Mr

[1]See Table 51 of *Road Accident Statistics Great Britain 1976*. HMSO, 1977, £2·25. ISBN 0 11 550418 4.

Road Casualties in Great Britain 1977

	Killed	Seriously injured	Slightly injured	Total casualties	% change compared with 1976
Pedestrians	2,312	19,177	49,807	71,296	+4
Pedal cyclists	300	4,723	18,441	23,464	+1
Users of:					
Mopeds	112	3,662	10,752	14,526	—
Motor scooters	27	510	1,263	1,800	–28
Motorcycles	1,043	16,152	38,169	55,364	+9
Cars and taxis	2.443	32,266	116,884	151,593	+2
Public service vehicles	64	1,269	11.043	12,376	–3
Goods vehicles	260	3,504	12,105	15,869	–4
Other vehicles	52	459	1,387	1,898	–9
Total	6,613	81,722	259,851	348,186	+3

Leslie Huckfield, said that the Department was also setting aside £100,000 for the Standing Committee for Schools' Science and Technology[1] to enable it to involve an increasing number of companies and local education authorities in the process of liaison.

Mr Huckfield also pointed out that an increasing proportion of students in higher education were choosing courses in engineering and science, and an increasing proportion of university graduates entering employment in Britain were going into manufacturing industry. 'These figures suggest that we are turning the corner, although there is still a great deal that can be achieved. The [IEU] will help this achievement', he concluded.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Recent developments in the Government's energy conservation programme have included the establishment of a new Energy Conservation Scheme, under which grants are being made available to industry and commerce for improving their heating plant and insulation of premises, and the expansion of the Energy Survey Scheme, which provides financial assistance towards the cost of a one-day visit by an energy consultant to advise on energy saving. The Secretary of State for Industry, Mr Eric Varley, announced in the House of Commons on 13 June (*Hansard*, written answers, col 391) that the Government had set aside £25 million for the Energy Conservation Scheme which would be selective and run for two years. There would be grants of 25 per cent towards the cost of replacing or modernising existing inefficient boiler plants and of insulating premises, grants for replacing or modernising combined heat and power systems, and grants of 50 per cent of the cost of associated consultancy work.

The extension of the Energy Survey Scheme was announced on 13 June by Dr John Cunningham, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State in the Department of Energy. Dr Cunningham said that surveys undertaken for industry and commerce under the original scheme had revealed that valuable energy savings were possible and many companies had acted on the advice contained in consultants' reports. However, it was impossible for consultants to conduct in-depth surveys during a one-day visit, particularly on large sites. More detailed work was often needed and, under the extended scheme, firms would be able to ask consultants to spend several days carrying out a survey and would be eligible for a grant of up to 50 per cent towards its cost. In addition, the maximum grant towards the cost of a one-day survey would be increased from £60 to £75. Dr Cunningham also announced that the Energy Saving Loan Scheme, under which short-term loans at fixed rates of interest had been available to firms undertaking projects yielding a rapid return in fuel savings, would be discontinued, as the types of project covered would be largely catered for by the Energy Conservation Scheme.

[1]The Committee sponsors the 17 Science and Technology Regional Organisations (SATROs), the main task of which is to encourage schools and industry to develop curricula, teaching aids and projects which will relate schoolwork to the requirements of local industry.

OIL PRODUCTION ACHIEVEMENT

Production of crude oil from Britain's offshore oilfields is now running at over 1 million barrels per day (bpd).[1] The latest monthly figures for oil production, issued by the Department of Energy on 27 June, show that production in May reached a record 1·1 million bpd, compared with 981,300 bpd in April 1978 and an average of 756,000 bpd in 1977, making Britain the world's sixteenth largest oil producer. Output in May was equivalent to about 60 per cent of Britain's oil consumption, which is currently about 1·85 million bpd. The Secretary of State for Energy, Mr Anthony Wedgwood Benn, described the new production figures as 'a magnificent achievement by everyone engaged in the development of this invaluable national asset'. Mr Benn said that this was 'a significant milestone on our way to making the United Kingdom into one of the world's major oil producers'. Britain could look forward to a build-up to self-sufficiency in oil and a growing economic benefit which would provide the nation 'with a unique opportunity for economic recovery'.

EUROPEAN SATELLITE LAUNCHED

The experimental communications satellite, OTS-2, was successfully launched from the United States test range at Cape Canaveral, Florida, on the night of 11 May. British financial contributions to the project, as well as to the other European Space Agency communications programmes, are provided through the Department of Industry.

OTS-2 is the replacement for an identical satellite, OTS-1, which was destroyed when its launcher rocket exploded after lift-off in September 1977. Based on needs defined in consultation with other European post office and broadcasting authorities, it has been designed for a minimum lifetime of three years in preparation for an operational European Communications Satellite (ECS) system. Development of two operational satellites was approved in March 1978 and the first is scheduled for launching in 1981. For this European regional system, which will handle much of Europe's telephone, telex and television relay traffic, the launch of a total of four operational satellites into geostationary orbit by the European Ariane launcher is envisaged by 1990.

After the satellite has been placed in temporary orbit, a small rocket motor will be fired to position it in permanent orbit, thus ensuring that it remains at the same point 36,000 kilometres above the Equator. The coverage of the spacecraft's six antennae will then include Western Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, the Azores, the Canary Islands, Madeira and Iceland.

The aim of OTS-2 is to check the performance and reliability of equipment that will be carried on the definitive ECS, which, together with two maritime versions, is now under development at a cost of about £75 million (see p 172). (The maritime satellites will be launched in 1980.)

[1]1 barrel = 0·135 tonne.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Recent Social Trends

A number of recent social changes in Great Britain are described in two separate reports published in June by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys. They cover such topics as population, household structure, housing and employment.

The reports are the *Demographic Review 1977* and *The General Household Survey 1976*.[1] The Review is a stocktaking study of population, commissioned as part of a programme of research on population matters by the Registrars General for England and Wales and for Scotland. The General Household Survey is a continuing survey based on an annual random sample of some 15,000 households. Some of the main points from each publication are mentioned below.

DEMOGRAPHIC REVIEW

In the last two years the annual numbers of births have fallen marginally below the annual numbers of deaths for the first time since statistics began to be collected in the middle of the last century (other than in wartime). Taking into account the net losses due to migration as well, the population has shown a small decline from the maximum it reached in 1974. This cessation of population growth is a situation which Britain faces in common with a number of other European countries and of which there is no previous experience. Some of the implications of current trends, discussed in the Review, are as follows:

1 The rapidly falling numbers of children of school age will continue to affect the demands on education and hence on teacher training.

2 During the next five or six years more young people will be entering the working age-group and fewer old people leaving it because of the rising birth rates in the period from 1955 to 1964 and because of the low birth rates of the period during and after the first world war (1914-18).

3 In the next few years the relatively younger age structure of the working population should permit flexibility in the use of labour, but it will also require more jobs to be created for the young and increased provision of training facilities.

[1] *Demographic Review 1977*, HMSO, £2·75 ISBN 0 11 690680 4; *The General Household Survey 1976*, HMSO, £10, ISBN 0 11 700827 3.

4 The proportion of the population of pensionable age has been rising and will continue to do so during the late 1970s and the 1980s. Within the pensionable population, the numbers of very old people (aged 85 and over) will increase continuously, and heavy demands will be made on social and medical services.

5 The increasing numbers of people reaching peak marriageable ages and of elderly people will lead to an increase in the demand for housing, and to changes in the preferred types of housing, especially if the numbers of young childless couples were to increase.

6 The small family has become a feature of British society (see below). Earlier marriage and the shorter period spent in childbearing mean that most women have finished childbearing by their early thirties. Many of these women will be seeking work, and there may well be a need for retraining women returning to gainful employment, and for consideration of child-care facilities.

7 Migration from the cities, particularly by the young and skilled, to locations increasingly distant from the centre but mainly within the same regions of the country is likely to continue.

8 In the future, relatively large variations may be expected in the annual numbers of births. The experience of the last ten years has shown the rapidity, and the extent, of the changes which can occur in numbers of births. In the future, the Review recommends, planning should be flexible and should allow for different contingent demographic developments.

Mortality

Mortality rates have continued to fall, more for women than for men. However, the rates of fall have not kept pace with those of some other European countries, where, the Review notes, greater success has been achieved in reducing death rates of infants and of the middle-aged and the elderly. Death rates for children and young adults in Britain, on the other hand, are among the lowest recorded in Europe.

Fertility

Numbers of births have fallen continuously since 1964. Analysis shows a tendency to postpone births within marriage, to compress the period during which women are engaged in bearing and rearing children, and for fewer families to have more than

two children. The proportion of childless marriages also seems to be increasing a little.

The main method of restricting fertility is contraception; the contraceptive pill in particular has been used more widely, although sterilisation, both of men and women, has increased, and appreciable proportions of married men and women in their mid-thirties have been sterilised. Induced abortion (under the Abortion Act 1967) has also been an important determinant of the outcome of pregnancies conceived outside marriage and of pregnancies in older women. Abortion does not, however, account for the sharp decline in numbers of births in the first half of the 1970s. Numbers of abortions have been relatively stable since 1973.

It seems likely, the Review notes, that the group of women now in their twenties – the ages at which most childbearing occurs – are not going to have enough children in total to replace their generation. There are many uncertainties about the future numbers of births: during the next 15 years the numbers of women of reproductive age in the population will increase by 10 per cent, and this seems likely before long to contribute to an increase in births.

Marriage and Divorce

The number of marriages has fallen recently, and the average ages at which men and women first marry (about 25 and 23 respectively) are no longer decreasing. The increasing proportion of men in the population has meant that their marriage rates have fallen more than those of women, and that men will continue to experience greater difficulties than women in finding marriage partners. Divorces have increased sharply, especially since the Divorce Reform Act 1969 (for England and Wales), and particularly among younger men and women. There is, however, a high rate of remarriage among the younger divorced population.

International Migration

Britain is traditionally a net exporter of people, but the small net figures conceal larger numbers of immigrants and emigrants. A considerable proportion of the inflow and outflow is accounted for by returning migrants. Unlike most other European countries, Britain draws most of its immigrants from outside Europe. In the 1950s there was substantial immigration from the Caribbean area, followed in the 1960s by immigration from Asia and Africa (some of those from Africa being of Asian origin). Emigration from Britain has been mainly to the Old Commonwealth (Australia, Canada and New Zealand), Europe, the United States and South Africa.

At present the population of New Commonwealth and Pakistani ethnic origin (which includes their children born in Britain) represents about 3 per cent of the population. The age structure of this group of the population is relatively young, and consequently births currently account for about 7 per cent of all births, and deaths only 1 per cent of all deaths in Britain. The overall fertility rate (births related to the number of women of childbearing age) among West Indians, the group longest established in Britain, has fallen sharply over recent years. Among the population of Asian origin, fertility has started to decline, although it is still considerably higher than that of the indigenous population.

Population Distribution

There has been significant migration of population from northern Britain and Wales towards the Midlands and south, and, at the same time, movement away from the larger urban centres. During the 1970s there have, as a result, been significant population decreases in northern Britain, in the major conurbations and in the South East region of England taken as a whole. The largest increases, numerically and proportionately, have been in the South West, East Anglia and the East Midlands. These broad trends are expected to continue into the 1980s.

HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

The General Household Survey has collected information on a wide range of social topics every year since 1971, and the 1976 report includes a special chapter on changes that have been recorded over the six-year period. Some of the points from this chapter and from the 1976 findings are set out below.

Households

The size of the British household is changing: on average it fell from 2·91 members in 1971 to 2·76 in 1976. This fall largely reflects an increase in the proportion of households containing one person, from 17 per cent in 1971 to 21 per cent in 1976. The trend is particularly marked by an increase, of about a fifth, in the proportion of people aged 70 or over (mainly widows) who were living alone.

There have also been notable changes in the size and composition of families. The decline in the birth rate, as noted above from the Demographic Review, has meant a fall in the number of larger families and a rise in the number of smaller families. For example, 30 per cent of women who had been married for about nine years in 1971 (and who would have passed the peak childbearing period) had three or more children, compared with only 21 per cent of those married for the same time in 1976. Of those questioned in 1971, 15 per cent had one child and 47 per cent had two; the corresponding figures in 1976 were 19 per cent and 51 per cent.

The Survey has also shown an increasing tendency for recently married couples to delay having a family. Among women married between 1960 and 1964 about 47 per cent were still childless after two years of marriage, compared with 54 per cent of those married between 1969 and 1971. This trend has been especially noticeable among more educated women with husbands in non-manual occupations, the proportion childless after two years of marriage rising from 57 per cent for those married between 1960 and 1964 to 74 per cent for those married between 1969 and 1971.

Over the period from 1971 to 1976 there was an increase in the proportion of families headed by a single parent from 9 per cent to 12 per cent. One of the main reasons for this, says the Survey, was a doubling in the proportion of such families headed by divorced women. In general, the number of divorced people found in the sample for the Survey doubled between 1971 and 1976.

Housing

There has been an increase in home ownership, from 49 per cent of households in 1971 to 51 per cent in 1976, and in renting from local authorities, from 31 per cent to 34 per cent. Conversely, there has been a decline in the proportion of households in the privately rented sector, from 20 per cent to 15 per cent.

The period of the Survey has also seen general improvements in housing standards. The proportion of households with sole use of private bath or shower rose from 88 per cent to 93 per cent, and that of households with sole use of an inside lavatory from 85 per cent to 92 per cent. Some 35 per cent of households had central heating in 1971, but by 1976 the figure was 49 per cent; this rise was apparent in all types of tenure but was most noticeable among local authority tenants. Overcrowding has declined: in 1971, 7 per cent of households had insufficient bedrooms as measured by the 'bedroom standard', compared with 4 per cent in 1976. (The bedroom standard is a measure which allocates a standard number of bedrooms to each household in accordance with the age, sex and marital status of members of the household.)

Consumer Durables

There have been increases in the level of possession of a range of consumer durables, the biggest increases being in telephones (from 42 per cent of households in 1972 to 54 per cent in 1976) and refrigerators (from 73 per cent to 88 per cent). Substantial differences remain between socio-economic groups, however. Whereas 87 per cent of professional workers, employers and managers had a telephone in 1976, and a similar proportion had a car, only 36 per cent of semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers had a telephone, and 29 per cent had a car.

Employment

The trend of the 1960s for more married women to go out to work has continued into the 1970s. In 1971 some 44 per cent of married women were in the labour force but by 1976 the proportion was 50 per cent. Among women with dependent children, the proportion in paid employment rose by about a fifth over the period; the whole of this increase in the proportion of working mothers was in part-time working.

The 1970s have seen an extension of the coverage of employers' sick-pay and pension schemes for full-time employees. In 1971 some 71 per cent of both men and women were covered by sick-pay schemes; by 1976 the figures were 77 per cent for men and 80 per cent for women. The increase was especially noticeable among manual workers, rising from 48 per cent to 60 per cent for skilled workers and from 50 per cent to 60 per cent for semi-skilled workers. The growth in coverage of employers' pension schemes was even more marked, rising from 55 per cent of men to 65 per cent, and from 34 per cent of women to 50 per cent between 1972 and 1976.

Educational Qualifications

A narrowing of differentials in earnings between people with different levels of qualifications has been apparent in the early 1970s. In 1971 full-time male workers holding a degree or similar professional qualification reported earnings 2·1 times the average for all full-time male workers; by 1976 this ratio had fallen to 1·7. A similar though smaller reduction in differentials occurred among women workers.

Women's average earnings have recently generally risen relatively faster than men's. This has been particularly true among the highly qualified; within this group, the ratio of average earnings of women to those of men rose from 56 per cent to 60 in 1971 to about 72 per cent to 76 in 1976. (In view of the equal pay legislation the differences between the average earnings of men and women can be taken to reflect differences in the kind of work done.)

Cigarette Smoking

Questions about cigarette smoking have been included in the General Household Survey since 1972. Over the period the proportion of adult men who smoke cigarettes has fallen, from 52 per cent in 1972 to 46 per cent in 1976. The proportion of adult women who smoke fell from 41 per cent in 1972 to 38 per cent in 1976. The average consumption per smoker, however, has risen for both men and women. The Survey shows a relationship between smoking and socio-economic group: throughout the period from 1972 to 1976 there was a smaller proportion of smokers among the professional group than among unskilled manual workers, and for both men and women the fall in the proportion smoking was greatest among the professional group and smallest among semi-skilled manual workers.

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